

A  
CONFERENCE  
BETWEEN  
Two Friends,  
A  
CALVINIST  
AND A  
Church of England-Man,  
CONCERNING  
PREDESTINATION.

Published for the Information and  
Instruction of such Plain Chri-  
stians as are troubled about that  
DOCTRINE.

By Edward Nicholson, M. A.  
*Author of the Conference between the  
Soul and the Body.*

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Two Volumes

CALVINIST

Church of England and

PREDICATION

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and the Ministry of the Gospel  
DOCTRINE

By COLLECTOR  
Author of the Church of England  
and the Ministry of the Gospel

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THE  
PREFACE  
TO THE  
READER.

**I** Find I must, in my own defence, acquaint the Reader that this is no feigned Conference ; or else I must be accountable for all the weakness of this Calvinist's Arguments, as if I had invented such, to make up a Triumph for my self, in confuting them : But I declare I have produced nothing on his side, but what I have taken either from the word of Mouth, or the Hand Writing of him that held this Contest with me ; whom I have so great a value for, that nothing but my Conscience for the Truth of God, and for the Credit of our Church, cou'd make me Publish a Dispute

with him; tho' I conceal his Name. And especially all the long Speeches, are verbatim from his own Hand Writing, and so are almost all the shorter ones, except some very few, which I depended on his word of Mouth for; and which I am sure he cannot deny was spoken. And perhaps there is a single Sentence inserted here or there, and but very few, to introduce the Subject, and make Coherence in the Responses; yet all of them such as agree with the main sense of his Tenents; and not a jot of his Strength have I left out in the whole.

If his Scheme had not been too Zealously Prosecuted, by dispersing several small Manuscript Books, of his Writing, to justify it; and by pressing the Church of England to side with his Cause; and all Private Reference refused me: I had not been concern'd to make this Publick; which intends no Reflection; but is intirely designed to ease some good Peoples Consciences; and to Vindicate our Church. And if it be thought fit to be farther prosecuted, I am ready to follow it, God willing. And tho' he that attacks me shall think fit to conceal

## The Preface.

conceal his Name, as I have done already for him; yet will I own mine. And non quils; sed quid, shall be my Rule. Not who speaks, but what is spoken.

'Tis true, my Antagonist told me, that when once I had Enter'd the Lists, he knew I would never give over. But let the Reader judge whether he has done any thing to oblige me to give over, without Answering him. I confess I cannot look upon this Cause to be so frivolous, or indifferent, as to suffer silently the best Friend in the World to carry it against our Holy Church, and all her Principal Living Pastors, Prelates, and Doctors: And so be Guilty thereby my Self, of being Accessary to that Base and Refuge the wicked find in these Principles I oppose. For I never yet saw any Crafty Debauchee, nor Hypocrite, among Protestants, who understood the Calvinist's Principles, but always defended himself by the Arguments of that Scheme, making it one of the strong holds of Sin. Not only the Vulgar by their Tongues; but also their Learned Sort by the Press. As even Mr. Hobbs, Mr. Asgill, and others have

have done in Print. It is not enough to say the Profane may abuse any Mystery ; but when they have got one, they think they can make such a Reasonable Sanctuary for Sin ; and which is no Article of our Creed ; nor built on any undeniable Truth of clear Scripture ; we must throw it quite down, and deprive them of any such Fortrefs for Iniquity.

As to Entering the Lists, which my Friend upbraids me with, I declare I never was in love with Disputing, nor ever Enter'd those Lists, but when my Conscience forced me, in Defence of such Truths, as the Honour of God, and Credit of our Church, appear'd to me highly concern'd in. And that not for Vain-Glory : That is not the way to it ; Well Palliated Lies, and smooth pleasing Deceits, Ingeniously set off, with Florid Eloquence, gets all the Vain-glory now a-days : 'Tis the wrong way for that, to tell down-right Truths, that are unpleasing to Flesh and Blood. And especially for one so little quallify'd as I am, to appear on the Stage, in this Critical Censorious Age ; And be Exposed  
among

among a Croud of such Carping, Envious, and Malicious Natures, as we abound with. But (as St. Paul hath Taught me) None of these things move me, Acts 20. 24. If I may by any means serve the Spiritual Concerns, and Souls of some Good Christians, I have my End. And if ever I happen to find Truth (which only I contend for) is against me in any thing, I will then give that thing over, and own my Conviction with Thankfulness. Which I think I am very sure, in this Cause, will never happen.

This is all I thought fit to apprize the Readers of, and so submit the whole to their Impartial Censure.



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This is all I thought fit to signify the  
Readers of, and to submit the whole to  
their impartial Censure.

of am I am sure you have read this letter  
 about the doctrine of predestination  
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 about the doctrine of predestination

# A Confession

## of the Doctrine of Predestination, &c.

Sir, I have a great pleasure to give you of the Doctrine of PREDESTINATION, most agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, and most Comfortable to the Faith-

ful. Well, my good Friend, or you will kill the Aggressor, so you ought not to take it ill, if I must defend my Principles, until I see some Reasons to change them.

**Calvin.** No, 'Tis you I take to be the Aggressor, and cannot but take it very ill too; that in my House, and hearing, you affirm'd openly, before several good People, that which I had about a Month before affirm'd the Contrary of, before the same Persons, Which I took to be a designed Affront, and intended to do me Mischief.

**Ch-Man.** You thus confess your self to be the Aggressor, by having first began the Dispute: Had you forbore bringing up that disobliging Controversy, and among People too, that were not generally of your strain, you had not met the trouble of any Opposition. And when I did speak of it so long after, it was at the request of some of the

best of those that heard you, who entreated me to speak my Sense, and satisfy their Conscience, about what was our Churches Doctrine in that Point.

**Calvin.** Well, well, Misunderstandings are nothing, this is but loss of time; I have now a mind to let you see, that I can give an Account of my thoughts on the Subject in Question. Let us have a Familiar and Free Discourse now, as Friends. For I find you do hold that wrong Sense of Predestination, which we on our side do call Arminianism, tending to Free-Will, and Conditional Election. I take all to be Enemies of God's Adorable Decrees, that offer to deny the Absolute Unconditional Election to Heaven of every one that is saved, and that only by the full and free Predestination of God, without any foresight of, or regard to, their Works. Let us see what you can say more on that Point.

**Ch-Man.** With all my Heart; Provided you will not fall into Passion, nor call us many Names: For I have always found that Infirmary in most of your way, that they are generally peevish, and impatient of Contradiction in this Point.

**Calvin.** Why, wou'd it not vex the Orthodox, to have Pelagians, Semipelagians, Molinists, Arminians, Papistical Meritorians, and such like Enemies of God's Adorable Decrees, corrupt the Protestant Doctrine, and Encourage Popery, by their Doctrine of Works of Merits, and pretend to be Protestants the while.

**Ch-Man.** There, I knew you wou'd be for calling us torreign Names. Some of your Teachers have better skill at calling Names, than making or Answering Arguments.

**Calvin.** Why do you call us Names then? Why do you call me Calvinist?

**Ch-Man.** That is but the only Note of Distinction which your Selves have appropriated to your Doctrine, as distinguished from the Church of England

land Doctrine. At the Divines that follow a Foreign Scheme of Doctrine, first set up among Protestants by Mr. Calvin, do therewith dispute the Doctrine which the Church of England Divines Teach, how can we distinguish these Two Parties, but by the Names of *Calvinists*, and *Church of England Men*. And if a Lay-Man it self dispute the Cause, he must take to himself the Name of the Party he stands for; So that you are not wrong'd in being stiled *Calvinist*, as to his Scheme of Doctrine, any more than I am by that of *Church of England Man*; other Names are Foreign to our Church. But if I shou'd hunt for other Foreign Names that belong not to the *Calvinists*, and that were first made generally Scar-Crows to the Vulgar, and render'd constantly odious to the People; and then fasten'd them upon *Calvinists*, I confess I shou'd then be guilty of what I find fault with, in you. But your great mistake has been, that you thought the generality of the present Church of England Doctors join'd with the *Calvinist* Doctrine; which you espouse not in one point only, but in many Heads of Doctrine. And if you have since found the present Church of England does not join with you, yet you seem resolv'd to oppose her, and maintain your own way. We hold nothing with *Pelagius*, nor his Followers, in what may be counted his Heresy, unless Free-Will, and Conditional Election, be thought such; and in that we care not who holds with us, whether Papists, Jews, Turks, or Heathens; but the two last, we know, do generally hold with Mr. Calvin's fatal Point, and you follow him in that, at least by your Consequences; And in all the rest of his Doctrinal Scheme, entirely. We care not for the Names of any that have wrangled in this Cause; we seek not for their Sense, but the Scripture Sense: Nor can we call any Man Master upon Earth, not Mr. Calvin himself; Christ is our Master. Nor will we pin our

Faith upon any Man's Sleeve, nor yield our Con-  
 fidences to any Author, but to the Author and Finisher  
 of our Faith. Our Church thinks her own Authority  
 as good as any Forreign Churches, and better in  
 her own Precincts.

**Calvin.** What will you not submit to the Do-  
 ctrine of all the Learn'd Reform'd Churches beyond  
 Sea? Do you think I follow Mr. Calvin Blindfold?  
 I am sure I never told you so. For my part I do  
 honour the Memory of this good and learned Man,  
 yet I differ in something from him.

**Ch. Man.** In his Discipline I confess you do,  
 and not without good Reason: But nothing did I  
 ever find you differ from him in his Doctrine, unless  
 in one little pretended distinction, in one point;  
 which distinction is just nothing. And whilst you  
 stick to his whole Scheme, any one will take you to  
 be a Calvinist: And I found you very pettish once,  
 when I happen'd but to name Calvinists, and Lu-  
 therans, without Approbation of the Calvinists;  
 tho' at that time you had no reason to imagine, nor  
 I to think, of including you in that Discourse:  
 But you seem'd highly concern'd for all Calvinists  
 in general; and I suppose you have not forsaken  
 them yet; tho' I wish you may; for you'll at last  
 find their Scheme indefensible. And all the Books  
 you shew'd me, since we began this difference, to  
 Establish your Principles, and Confute mine, were  
 some of the most thorow-paced Calvinist Writers,  
 as, *Johannis Vander Waeyen summa Theologiae Christianae*.  
 And also *Francisci Turretini Institutio Theologiae Elen-  
 ticae*. He should have said, *Sophistica*. But what  
 mischief Mr. Calvin's System has done to Christia-  
 nity, we are so sensible of, that we cannot make  
 him one of our Saints.

**Calvin.** Sure Mr. Calvin was a Chief Pillar of the  
 Reformation, and you cannot deny but that there  
 are Forreign Saints; God grant me to sit at their  
 Foot-stool



Foot-stool in the Kingdom of Heaven.  
**Ch. Span.** This, it's true, you told me before in  
 your Letters. For my part (say you) I do honour  
 the Memory of that Good and Learned Man. And as  
 for bringing any Foreign Saints among your own (mean-  
 ing the Church of England Saints, because I had told  
 you we of the Church of England counted Calvin  
 none of our Saints) it were perfect Madness (say you) for  
 I believe your Modern ones would hardly Admit them to  
 hold a Candle to them: But however there are foreign  
 Saints, and I pray to God I may see fit, under their  
 Foot-stool in the Kingdom of Heaven. No doubt there  
 has been Foreign Saints, and it's like enough you  
 may think Mr. Calvin one. But perhaps we are not  
 of your mind. His Disciples indeed do often En-  
 deavour to run us down with his Authority. For  
 which reason I must tell you (as I did a Calvinist  
 before that Disputed with me about the Death-bed Re-  
 pentance with his Authority) what we of the Church  
 of England do think of Mr. Calvin. We are loth to  
 deny any one their due Praise, in what is Praise-  
 Worthy; and we own Mr. Calvin was a very polite  
 Latinist, and an Ingenious and very Politick Man,  
 and we know, that as the case stood with him in Ge-  
 neva, he managed his part Artifically enough, for  
 the Settlement of a Reformation from Popery in  
 that City; by which he got no small Fame. But  
 his way, in that Work, was never admitted in Eng-  
 land, for which he was very angry at us, and has  
 revenged it sufficiently upon us since, as he was also  
 Angry at the Lutheran Churches, who kept their  
 Episcopacy as we did. The first Foundation pre-  
 tended for his way of Reforming, without Bishops,  
 was the Necessity of their Circumstances in Gene-  
 va, who could not then have Bishops. The Learn-  
 ed Mr. Hooker in the Preface to his Ecclesiastical Po-  
 lity, may satisfy the English Reader with the History  
 of that at large, and how he was glad to beg the  
 Suffrage

Suffrage of the Four Helvetian Churches, that were Episcopal Protestant Churches, to approve his way then, for the Necessity they were in; assuring them privately, that Ropery wou'd else speedily get in again, if those Churches, to which the People of Geneva had appeal'd, did not approve of his new Invented Discipline, immediately, to quiet the People. And those Bishops complied with him in that, thro' Charity. But after his Model was firmly Settled, he long'd to have all other Churches like his, that he might pass for the Chief Father of all the Reformation.

**Calvin.** Was he not the Learned'st Writer of his Age? Was he not the first that writ a whole Body of Divinity in the Protestant way, called his *Institutions*? And was not that received with Universal Approbation.

**Ch-Man.** That he took great pains in writing, we allow, but not that he was the Learned'st in his Age. He was indeed the First that, for young Protestant Scholars, writ a Systematical (I had like to say Schismatical) Abridgment of Theology, call'd his *Institutions*; where there lay an undiscerned Snake in the Grass. For he Vying with the Episcopal Churches for Purity; and desiring to draw their Disciples from them into his own Model, he knew, if the Contest were barely about Episcopacy alone, he wou'd be worsted by all Antiquity. And therefore to have something to draw People to his way, he writes a Fine New Scheme of Theology, pretendedly for Protestant young Students in General, which he knew in time, if Universally followed, wou'd supplant the old way; And then the Old Form of Church-Government too, wou'd be like to drop with the Old Doctrine at last: And mean while there wou'd be something to wrangle about, and constant fuel for Contention with the Episcopal Churches, who, he knew, wou'd always encline

encline to the Old Theory of Practical Divinity. This undiscerned design was at last found to obtain much of its end. For his *Institutions*, by reason of the Fineness of the Latin; And as being the shortest way to Initiate young Students in the Knowledge of Divinity, was very much Read in all Places, as being a briefer way to set up for Preaching, by the help of such small Systems, than beginning at the right End, or Fountain Head, by Reading of Ancient Fathers, Councils, Canons, School-Men, and Histories, which wou'd be very tedious. His New Principles therefore were imbibed far and near, and admired among many of our own too; Especially on our Persecution, in the Popish Queen *Mary's* Days, when many fled out of *England* to *Geneva* for shelter: And coming home again, when the Persecution was over, in about Four Years; They brought such Notions with them from Mr. *Calvin*, as laid the seeds of all that has Troubled the Church of *England*, both in Queen *Elizabeth's* Days, and ever since. But whatever became of his Discipline, his Systematical Doctrine was much Swallowed, till Ancient Learning began to Revive and Flourish in our Universities. Then by degrees his Fine Spun Subtilties began to decay: and within this Age or two past, have been quite Exploded, by all the Eminentest Doctors of the Church of *England*; And all the Episcopal Protestant Churches in Christendom, have served him much the same way, and some of them worse, in refusing Communion with his Disciples. And that which the *Calvinists* rail at, by the Name of *Arminianism*, about Free-Will, carries the Cause against them in all Churches that have Bishops: Nay, and among some that are honest Presbyterians too.

*Calvin*. Is that so? I think quite otherwise yet. I was bred in Churches, where the Orthodox Doctrine of Christ's Gospel is Taught in it's Purity,  
and

I count it my Happiness that I was so; all the Protestant Churches in general, except the *Lutherans*, do hold with us, we have the most Orthodox, and Catholick Doctrine.

*Ch. Man.* By excepting the *Lutherans* it self, you make an Exception greater, and more Catholick than the *Calvinist* Churches; by how much the Churches that have Episcopacy, when in the true Faith, are more Catholick than the Churches that reject Bishops. But you shou'd have Excepted all the Primitive Churches too, and the present Church of *England* also. There neither is, nor ever was, any Episcopal Church in the World, except sometimes that of the Popish Fryars, that held as you, or your Party, do in what I have heard, and read in many of your Authors. You call your own side the Orthodox, just as the Papists call themselves the Catholicks; and by the same Rule too, that is, by beging the Question, or robbing it; for we say you are Heterodox in that Point, and Un-Catholick, even as the Papists are in theirs.

*Calvin.* Does not the Church of *England* Teach our Doctrine?

*Ch. Man.* Not at all, but the quite Contrary.

*Calvin.* Sure but she does in her Articles, perhaps you do not know rightly what it is I hold.

*Ch. Man.* Let me know it then.

*Calvin.* Why thus it is. I do not hold with the Rigid Predestinarians, that God has absolutely, or unconditionally Reprobated any one. But yet I hold that he does Absolutely, or Unconditionally, Save every one that is Saved: That is, the Elect are Unconditionally Saved. But the Reprobates Conditionally Damn'd. I hold a Condition in the Damnation side, but not in the Salvation side; And in this the Church of *England* justifies me by her Articles, wherein she holds an Absolute Election, but Condemns an Absolute Reprobation.

*Ch. Man.*

**Ch-Man.** The Church of *England* Teaches no such thing, in any of her Articles, the Seventeenth Article ( which you must mean ) meddles not with the pinch of the Controversy at all, but owns a Divine Predestination, as all true Sons of the Church do, but that this is Absolute, or Unconditional, for the Elect, without foresight of Faith and Obedience, it does not say : but it says expressly, that *we must receive God's Promises in such wise as they be generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture.* Now it is Evident the Scripture Promises of Heaven are all Conditional, and so therefore must our Election to Heaven be ; for Conditional Promises of Heaven, and Unconditional Election to Heaven, are as Contrary to each other as any thing can be. Do but shew me in what Article the Church of *England* condemns Unconditional Reprobation, if you can ; (as you say she does) and I will shew you that with the same Breath she Condemns Unconditional Election too. And the most part of these Un-Episcopal Churches, that hold Absolute Election, do hold Absolute Reprobation too. You can shew the same also, in your own choicest admired Books, of your Learn'd Tutors, and Professors, those Chymical Divines, which you have so often Recommended to me, and lent me to read.

**Calvin.** Chymical Divines ! Why do you call them Chymical.

**Ch-Man.** Because they Endeavour to Sublimate and Evaporate away the weightier parts of Religion, into Fumes, Smoak, and Vapors ; For if all their Scheme were true, most of the Practical part of Religion, wou'd be vanished into Airy Notions. And as the *Chymists* pretend (some of them, as *Glauber* does) to their great *Mystery*, or *Arcanum* of the *Philosopher's* Stone, so these have their great *Mystery*, *Abyss*, and Unintelligible *Arcanum*, of the hidden Absolute Decree, and turn all the *Caput Mortuum* of Religion, (which



is all their Chymistry leaves at last) into that one Golden Absolute Decree. And indeed that we have lost so much of the Practical part of Religion already among Protestants, does undoubtedly proceed, in great Measure, from the prevalency of these Principles; the weakness of which, left us ungarded against the Assaults of Atheism and Debauchery, on the one Hand; and on the other Hand, left us open to Hypocrisie upon Principle, which sort of Hypocrisie, is indeed more deadly, than Debauchery it self against Principles: For he that wallows in all Debauchery Presumptuously against his own Principles, is not in so dangerous a case, as he that is a *whited wall*, that Privately Entertains some sort of Darling Sins, upon Principles that consist and comport with them. For the first may sometime, by a Seasonable Providence, be converted on his own Principles, which were quite Unreconcilable with his practice: But the Second will never be Converted, whilst he believes such Principles as may any way be reconcilable with his Practice. So that he, whilst those Principles dwell in him, must live and die a *whited Sepulcher*, as our Saviour calls a smooth Hypocrite. *Mat. 23, 27.*

And now some of your late Chymical Divines, have at last found out a great New-Nothing, Expecting therewith to heal the broken Heads, that *Arminians*, *Remonstrants*, and all others, and even the *Papists* had given them. That is your Present Distinction of half the Decree Conditional, and t'other half Unconditional. But this can do no good; but makes it a more confused heap of Nonsense, and more Indefensible. There is not the fourth part of the Un-Episcopal Churches themselves, that holds that opinion in your way of Unconditional Election, and yet Conditional Reprobation. 'Tis a Contradiction they were driven into at last, which I think no common sense can get over.

Calvin.

**Calvin.** O Sir, this Distinction, as it is coherent enough, so it is most useful; for there by I give God all the Glory of Man's Salvation, in the Elect side; And I make Man all the cause of his own Perdition, in the Reprobate side. And the Scriptures do prove the Absolute Election, but not the Absolute Reprobation: Election is Absolute, but Reprobation is upon foresight; and so I leave Man to be the cause and Procurer of his own Perdition. And thus God may be *Justify'd in his saying, and clear when he is Judged.*

**Ch. Man.** First, for the Scriptures, most of those you build on, do as well prove the Absolute Reprobation, as the Absolute Election. Cannot God make *some Vessels to Honour, and some to Dishonour?* Has not the Potter Power over his own Clay? Nay, but *who art thou, O Man, that repliest against God?* What if God willing to make his power known—&c. Now you must Answer these Scriptures the same way I do, or else you will never get rid of the Absolute Reprobation, any more than the Absolute Election, but it will always stick to the other. Nor does this Distinction Answer the end it was invented for; the other way it self of holding both sides Absolute, cou'd as well excuse God from being the Author of Man's Damnation, as this way can; Supposing, as we both do in this Dispute, that the Decree on each side, of Election and Reprobation, was made with respect to Man in the fallen State, under Guilt and Condemnation. Was not the blemish then Objected to be laid on God, that he gave not any means of Escape to any of those he left to Perish, but Absolutely Decreed they should have no means? This is all we can understand by Absolute Reprobation: And this is all the way, that Absolute Reprobation then, can pretend God to be the Author of their ruin. You'll say he made this Decree of their Reprobation upon foresight, but if that fore-

sight was that they would all Sin, there was the same foresight for all Mankind, and then this foresight therefore must further mean, that he foresaw, and Decreed Absolutely, that he would give these no means to escape, but to the others he would : This Decree of giving some the means, was no more Absolute than the Decree of denying means to the other was ; So that if the one be Absolute, the other must. But if he foresaw one would accept the means, and the other would not ; then all was Conditional, and none cou'd Complain. Is not this the Partiality Complain'd of, that to some he Decreed to give the Necessary means, which to others he Decreed he would not ? How is this last Decree then more Conditional than the other ? 'Tis I think a meer Banter upon all the reason of Mankind, as much as *Transubstantiation* is, which has been as well defended as this can be.

'Tis Strange to talk so about foresight, without any Conditions offer'd, but make foresight it self a Condition, as you do, calling a Reprobation upon foresight, and a Conditional Reptobation the same thing ; whereas the bare foresight had no Condition in it, but was rather, according to your way, a foresight of the quite Contrary, that they should have no Condition, nor means given them ; If we can understand what foresight meaneth at all, in God. And how does the Absoluteness of the Election afford any Mitigation to the complaints of the Reprobated ? It rather adds weight to them, and proves their Reprobation to be Absolute too. For by the same Principles, if Granted, that maintains Election to be Absolute, any one may as well maintain Reprobation to be Absolute also. If so many Men be equal guilty and condemn'd to be Burn't ; And after Condemnation, the Judge has Power to reprieve, and save so many as he pleases to pick out ; and he will, without any regard to any Qualifications (none being

being in any respect one jot better Qualified than another) chuse out by his meer Arbitrary will, so many, without any Condition offer'd, either to them, or the rest; and leaves the rest: Does he not then reject the rest as much without any Condition, as he took these without any? Is not his rejection as much without any Condition, as his Election was? And then when these Poor Wretches are carry'd to the Fire, can you say that the rejection of them was Conditional, what Condition had they offer'd them whereby to Escape Burning.

**Calvin.** What if I say, they had a Condition first, before the Fall.

**Ch-Man.** What then? So had the others that are now Elect'd; But that is not the state of the Question: For they all fell alike; But this Decree of their Discrimination is made after the fall, and General Condemnation, as we both allow, and as you have sometimes contended for. Now in this Decree, of Electing and Rejecting, in this case, if the one be without making Conditions, is not the other as much so too? What Conditions had they that are left offer'd, more than they that are taken? Indeed, I think whoever can get over this, with common sense, needs not despair to set up for the Maintaining of any Cause.

**Calvin.** God had a Foresight of final Impenitence in the Rejected, which made him Reject them.

**Ch-Man.** Werenot the others in the same Condition, before they were Elect'd? And why did he not Reject all, or Elect all, unless it was, that we must allow he had the same Foresight of the Faith and Repentance of these, as he had of the Impenitence of the other.

**Calvin.** No, there's the Dangerous case, that wou'd with *Arminius*, make Man the first mover to his own Recovery.

**Ch-Man.** The first mover; No, this is utterly wrong, and a very unjust Aspersi<sup>o</sup>n upon the Church

Church of ~~England~~ ; (*Arminius* I am not concern'd for) I tell you; as I often did before now, that we ascribe all to God in effect : We believe the first moving to be from God the Father, our Creator, who of his Unconceivable Goodness, meer Mercy, and Compassion, offer'd us a saving Covenant in his Son, and a Second moving to be from the Infinite Love of our Eternal Saviour, in his Dying to Redeem us: And a third moving, from his Holy Spirit's Vouchsafing to dwell with us, and Sanctify us; as many of us as will yield to be led by him; For we suppose he will not seize us by force, nor throw us into Heaven like Stocks or Stones: So that tho' we find we can yeild to be led by him, or not yield; And that we do chuse to yield, and to do the work; Yet we Ascribe all to him, and all the Praise and Glory to his Grace that Enabled us, and to his Mercy that Redeem'd us.

*Calvin.* All this Acknowledgment to God, is as Insignificant as the *Pharisees*, that said, *God I thank thee, I am not like other Men.*

*Ch-Man.* That's Wonderful Charity indeed! But pray Consider, it was not his giving thanks was the fault, but his being a proud Censorious Hypocrite, that would not own himself a Sinner. And I fear there is more of that among the Absolute Decree Men, than among their true Catholick Adversaries; For they Generally despise and villify the best Practicers, that will not hold the Absolute Unconditional Decree, and deny Free-will, and all Human Power to do, or chuse good. Which the *Pharisee* himself did not do, for he despised but the Publickly Profane Sinners.

*Calvin.* The chief thing we aim at, is to give the Honour to the free Grace of God, in the Salvation of Man, by an Absolute Election.

*Ch-Man.* But we think, that is not so Honourable to God, as a Conditional Election would be.

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We are sure it is not so among Men. Arbitrariness carries no great Honour in it's own Nature: And it is much more Honourable to God, to Express his Love of Vertue, and Hatred of Vice, by Rewarding one, and punishing the other; and making by his Decrees, his Eternal Rewards and Punishments, the principal Inducements to draw us from Vice, and lead us to Vertue: It shews us better than any thing can do, his Hatred to the one, and Delight in the other, and that tends much more to the Praise and Glory of his Holy, Good, and Sanctify'd Nature, than any Arbitrariness in Disposing his Rewards, or Punishments, cou'd do.

**Calvin.** Pray tell me how can Reprobation be but Conditional, where there is a desert of Damnation?

**Ch-Man.** That desert was, as Supposed, before the Decrees, we are speaking of. And they all then deserved alike. But if they be now Discriminated into two Partys since the Fall, how can one be Conditional more than t'other, in this Discrimination, unless some Condition be offer'd on that side you call Conditional, and none in t'other. All the Condition your way offers to the Reprobate is only a Condition of Impossibility; that is a mock Condition: For no Condition cou'd, according to your way, have saved any Reprobate, but God's Absolute Electing him to Heaven, and that's no Condition.

**Calvin.** And how can Election be but absolute, when all deserves nothing but Reprobation?

**Ch-Man.** Notwithstanding the desert of Reprobation, cou'd not an easy, merciful Condition be allow'd them, upon accepting which they shou'd be Elect'd, and saved from that Reprobation and Damnation; Where's the Impossibility of that? And is it not as easy to put a Condition to their Election, as to their Reprobation: all Conditions suppose a choice

choice given between two things, which is the very Nature of a Condition, so that if the Reprobates have a Condition, they have a Choice given them; *do this and live.* But if they have no such choice given them, then they are Reprobated Absolutely, without any Condition. If they have such a choice given them, and any do accept the Terms of Salvation, then they are Conditionally Elected. Moreover this Conditional Reprobation, and Unconditional Election, wou'd Imply, that God Covenants only with Reprobates, and not with the Elect; for every Covenant Implies a Condition, and every Condition Implies a Covenant; or else it will Imply that God makes no Covenant at all with Mankind about his Salvation, and then farewell the second Covenant of Grace:

**Calvin.** It seems you wou'd fain put me, and them I hold with, among the Rigid Predestinarians. Although I have told you your Mistake, and that I do not hold any Man to be absolutely or unconditionally Reprobated. But only that the Elect are unconditionally saved. And sure there can be no Rigidness on the Saving Side. You are exceeding zealously, and unseasonably bent, against God's Adorable Decrees. I find.

**Ch-Man.** I wou'd not willing put you with any Bad Company that I cou'd keep you from, or clear you of; but if you will put your self among them, I cannot help it. I never knew of any thing spoken, nor written by you, against that which you now call, the Rigid Way; before your Disputes with me, for my asserting Conditional Election; tho' I have been assured that some time before, in that very place where you Tax me for my Speech on that Subject, you heard another Affirm the Rigidest Part, that you now call so; (which was one Reason of my Asserting the Church of England's Doctrine, against that Strain, and which you were so

so Angry at me for ) and yet you did not give him the least objection for it. And truly if you had, I think, he might have been too hard for you, by your own Principles. For the plain Truth is, Unconditional Election is as Rigid an Overthrower of all Industry and Morality amongst the Generality of People, as Unconditional Reprobation can possibly be. Besides, that there's no separating the one from the other in Common Sense, but that the Difference on both sides must be of the same Nature, either both Conditional, or both Absolute. The one is hung like a Mill-stone about the Neck of the other, and they must both sink or swim together.

**Calvin.** How can that be? Will it not consist both with Scripture and Reason, to make one Conditional, and the other Absolute.

**Ch. 2d.** No, 'twill agree with neither. For the Scripture has no more excluded Faith and Repentance out of the side of Election, than it has Infidelity and Impenitence out of the side of Reprobation. And by the Law or Rule of Contraries, what ever is Conditional on one side, the contrary must be Conditional on the contrary side. And so if on the Reprobation side Impenitence be the Condition, Repentance must be the Condition on the Election side. So that they who hold it Unconditional on one side, must still be as Rigid Predeterminarians, as those that hold it Unconditional on both sides: For one side will still infer the other. And besides, Absolute Election will as much destroy the Necessity of good Life, as Absolute Reprobation. As to my Unseasonableness, every thing is so, to another that does not like it, and your way may be more so to others than you are aware of.

**Calvin.** Why are you so excessively zealous

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in this Cause, if you were less Zealous in this Matter, it might fare better with you.

**Ch-Man.** Because, I own, I know no Doctrine which deserves it better next the Articles of our Creed; than to endeavour the clearing God's Adorable Decrees of our Salvation or Damnation, from that most dishonourable Charge of Arbitrariness: Which roots up all the Foundations of Industry and Vertue.

**Carlin.** Nay, but I can Vouch for the good Lives of many of those that Believe the Absolute Unconditional Predestination; and that many of them laid down their Lives for their Consciences. The Ministers of the Church in France generally Preached that Doctrine, and yet we see how they endured Persecution for the Faith; which shews, the Gracious temper of those that Believe that Doctrine.

**Ch-Man.** But it was not the believing that Doctrine made them Gracious; We know there are many, both Papists, Turks, and Jews, that by honesty of Heart, have overcome the Malignity of their Principles, and lived very Good Lives; and would sooner Die than comply with wickedness, or Swear Solemnly against their Conscience. And if so many were found among the Protestants of France that were Honest, no thanks to the Absolute Decree Doctrine for that. But we Believe it hinder'd too many more from being Honest. Nor can we be perswaded, but that if the same Murdering Tyrant had been permitted by God (which the Lord forbid) to make the same Havock of the Church of England, as he did in France; there wou'd, in proportion to numbers, much fewer of the True Church of England's Subjects have Abjured their Religion, than did of the French. And that perhaps too, because the Rigid Scheme of Predestination has not

so much Influence among us (with the rest of Mr. Calvin's Tenents) as it had in France.

Calvin. What think you then of those that escaped, and are come to us; they believe the same Absolute Predestination still.

Ch. Man. We believe they that are come to us, are of the best sort of them, and we see they have generally left Calvin's Discipline, and comply with ours, and we believe they would do so with his Doctrine, if sufficient pains were taken to instruct them in the Difference. They are, we own, or at least would certainly be, some of our best Lived Protestants, if thoroughly acquainted with our Doctrine, and they agreed thereto; which perhaps, 'tis not one in twenty would be as obstinate against, as you are. Upon the whole, if you blame my Zeal in this point, I must tell you I cannot blame it my self. For I am fully persuaded, if ever our Sins do provoke the Lord to give up the Protestant Church to be scourged by her Enemies, these Pernicious Principles will be one Cause of it, and very deep in the Guilt. Nor do I believe any Error that ever came among the Protestant Churches has been capable to do, nor actually did, more Mischief to the Reformation, besides the Mischief it has done to particular Persons; For which Reason, I wish I had been all my Life, much more Zealous against it; and then it might possibly have pleased God, I might been Instrumental in saving some Lives, that this Absolute Election Doctrine has destroyed; some of whom I was too nearly concern'd for. But all I can do now, and hereafter, is to oppose it with my utmost Zeal wherever I meet it: For, perhaps, some good innocent, weak Christians, zealous for their Salvation, being timely Antidoted against that Infection, may thro' God's Blessing escape that Erenzy, which uses to make them shorten their own days. For I am not



of your Fatalists Opinion ( in the Books you lent me ) that any Foresight, or Decree, made their Lives end so by their own hands ; but the false Doctrine of their Teachers, which in time, by degrees, distracted them. And with the constant fear of the Absolute Uncontroulable Decree, not being on the right side for them, crazed their Wits, and so destroyed their Lives. But it is more strange why you should be so zealous now, for Foreign Doctrines, against our Church, that you now Communicate with.

**Calvin.** I can hardly be perswaded but these Foreigners, you oppose so, have as much Learning as any Men.

**Ch-Man.** Suppose they have ; so have many Jesuits and Fryars. But the use they make of their Learning, is to overthrow Common Reason, and leave honest People in doubts and darkness, when Subject to their Instruction ; that they may depend the more on their Mouth : And when they have Fettered them out of all their Understanding, so that they can know nothing, but what they please to instill into them ; then they must for ever rely on their Oracular Responses, in all the doubts and difficulties, and Spirits of Delusion, and Infatuation, that themselves have Conjured up, to support their own Faction, or Interest.

**Calvin.** Have not those Foreign Divines of Mr. Calvin's way, defended their Schemes by Learn'd, and great Theological Volumes.

**Ch-Man.** Yes, and so have the Papists. 'Tis an easy matter for Men of much Learning, and of a fluent Eloquence, to write Voluminously in defence of any false Cause ; but then they must carry it up high, out of the Reach of plain Capacity, and Obscure it with Philolophical Subtiltys. But Truth needs no such Varnish, Common Reason, Common Honesty, and plain Scripture Revelation,

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will easily justify Truth; and will all square with it, in Evident Terms: And besides, your great Philosophers, that to attack the plain Truths, that square with Common Reason, Honesty, and Scripture, have been, and are sufficiently, and as Learnedly, Answer'd in their own way, by as good and better Philosophers on our Side. And that's all the right use we shou'd make of Philosophy, or Metaphysical Theology, to defend and strengthen the true Sentiments of Plain Reason, Common Honesty, and Clear Scripture; not to confound them, by Abstruse Subtiltys, and Endless Jangles, as your Chymical, and Papistical Theologers, and Ostentatious Jargon Philosophers do.

But pray let us proceed from this Digression to the Business in Hand. What think you now, of the distinction, between the two Decrees of Election, and Reprobation.

**Calvin.** I cannot yet be satisfy'd, nor see why the Reprobation of the Damn'd, being left Conditional, we may not leave the Election Absolute.

**Ch. Man.** Cannot you see it yet? They say there's no Man so Blind as he that will not See. I must tell you, it is to me a very clear Case, that if you allow there be any Condition at all, on either Side; it must be on the Election Side chiefly, rather than the Reprobation Side; and that even by your own Stating the Matter: For here is a Condition offer'd, *Do this and live. They that do well shall go in to Life Everlasting. If ye do these things ye shall never fall.* Now God gives the Elect (as you own) Power to do these things; and so they perform the Condition, required for their Acceptance to Heaven: But the Reprobates (you own) are debarr'd all possibility of doing it: Therefore it can be no Condition to them; unless in Mockery proposed to them, to do a thing which they are precluded (even before they are Born) from all possibility

ability of doing. How then can the Sentence or Degree be Conditional in the Damnd, and Absolute in the Saved? The Damnd having been absolutely deny'd the means of Salvation, or any Power to perform the Condition, were therefore absolutely Reprobated. And the others, that had Power given to perform the Condition, are with best reason said to be Conditionally Saved. But some poor Trick these Teachers must have, to Support their Absurdity, and that's all I can make of it. For true Sense we cannot possibly find in it.

**Calvin.** But can there be any Rigidity in God's Saving of Sinners, tho' absolutely or unconditionally. The Saving Side cannot be Rigid. As to the Reprobates, he only passes them by with a *Præterition*.

**Ch-Man.** There can be no Rigidity in God, nor in his Ways, but there may be a great and abominable Rigidity in those Men that would make God's Ways of Salvation Arbitrary. The Absolute Election Doctrine is to all Intents and Purposes as Rigid, Unaccountable, and Unjustifiable, as the Absolute Reprobation Doctrine.

**Calvin.** Why do you call my Doctrine Abominable? I see for all you pretend to be my Friend, you do not Deal with me like a Friend, when you Represent my Doctrine so Odious, and fasten upon me, that what I hold is so Pernicious and Abominable.

**Ch-Man.** Is Friendship nothing else but Flattery and Complement? I know not a more Friendly Office I could do, than to tell you the Truth; and that I did with the greatest Kindness, Deference, and Respect to you that was possible, in all my Private Letters, when you Challeng'd me for my Opinion, and writ to me first about it. And is it not more Unfriendly in you to call me, and not me only, but all the Living Prelates and Do-

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Enemies of the Church of England and Ireland, Enemies of God's Decrees, Enemies of God's Election; Enemies of God's Adorable Decrees? And this after I had proved to you out of their best Authors, that they all held as I did, Free-will, and Conditional Election. But if you were my best Friend in the World, and my only Brother, by Father and Mother, and would attempt to set up your own Honour or Credit, against the Honour of the present Church of England, I neither should nor would Sacrifice away her Honour, by Complemental Silence, for your Credit.

I see you are not yet aware, that with Equivocating Words, you make God all out as Arbitrary on the Damnation Side it self, as on the Salvation Side. For this seeming soft word *Præterition*, that you are so fond of, and the other hard word, of *Absolute Reprobation*, that you so seemingly Renounce, are really in effect, but two different words for the same thing: For will not a Man that has the *Præterition* Lot, be as Absolutely, Certainly, and Infallibly Dam'd, as all the sorts of Decrees in the World could make him be? And if the Doctrine of Absolute Unconditional Reprobation, might make me (if a weak timorous Christian) apt to fall into despair, would your Doctrine of *Præterition* be any thing easier to me? If I am going to be hang'd by my Enemies, and it is in your power, without any trouble to you, even with a wink of your eye, to save me, but you will not, you fals me by with your *Præterition*, and give me no help. Is not that all one to me, as if you hang'd me your self? We all know that Damnation is the worst thing can happen; and if any Man must certainly and unavoidably be Dam'd, which is the Infallible Consequence of *Præterition*, when no condition of escape has been offer'd him, at least since he was born, (for if any Condition was offer'd his first

first Parents, that's no Condition to him in his Life-time) what matter is it to him then, whether his Damnation be brought to pass effectually, by *Præterition*, or by a Stated Absolute Decree of Reprobation. God's *Præterition* of a Man cannot in Common Sense mean any thing else, but the Reprobation of him; and if this be not done for any cause of the Man's own giving, more than they gave that are Electèd and Saved, how could the Man help it then, what hurt has he done more than they; is not this enough to make Men Desperate, and Blaspheme? What good then does your Orthodox word, *Præterition* do us, to salve God's Mercy and Goodness on the Reprobation side? We count all to be Rigid Predestinarians that hold the Absolute Unconditional Decree, whether on the Salvation, or Damnation side, and we think they that hold it on both sides are more Reasonable and Coherent, than they that hold it but on one side. In short, Conditional *Præterition*, and Absolute Non-*Præterition*, is just the same, as Conditional Sense, and Absolute Nonsense. How do you salve God's Mercy and Goodness thus, on the *Præterition* side.

**Calvin.** How do you salve it then? For you own a Reprobation your self?

**Ch-Man.** Ay, but not by an Original *Præterition*. But by a wilful Contumacy against God's Holy Spirit, and abusing of his Grace, and rejecting the Gracious Conditions he offers, and the Power, if they will, to perform those Conditions. God certainly gives both sides Power to perform the Condition, if they will; and so God is the Author of our Salvation: And as I have shewn, he will be more Honourably so, by a Conditional Election, than by any Arbitrary way of Absolute Unconditional Dealings; And thus God may be better Justified in his Sayings, and cleared when he is Judged; Which Scripture Text you misapply: But I will give you another



another or two for it : Which gives us a most Righteous Account of God's Dealings, far from Arbitrary, or making his Will his Reason (I will because I will, is no good reason) where he appeals to our selves to Judge of the Equity of his ways. *O House of Israel are not my ways Equal, in Ezech. 18, that whole Chapter, and 33, 18. When the Righteous turneth from his Righteousness and committeth Iniquity, he shall even die thereby, but if the Wicked turn from his Wickedness, and do that which is Lawful and Right, he shall live thereby.* Not by any Arbitrary Decrees, but by doing what God Commands him, *thereby he shall live.* The Word *thereby* is Equally on both sides, and therefore both sides are alike Conditional. And *Isa. 5, 3. Judge I pray you between me and my Vineyard, what could I have done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done,* God would have us see the Equity, not the Arbitrariness of his Will, in our Salvation or Damnation. And what Reason can think it Equitable, that poor innocent Children, for Example, thou'd be Damn'd to Hell-Fire in all Eternity, for the fault of their first Parents, long before they were born, by Decrees of Reprobation, which this Scheme calls Conditional too ; and no Condition ever given to those poor Souls ; Contrary to God's Solemn Attestation. *Ezech. 18, 20. The Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father, neither shall the Father bear the Iniquity of the Son.*

Calvin. But how do you Answer what *Kropper* saith, *Neminem indebite damnans, &c.* God (saith he) Damns no Man, without having deserved it, nor Saves he any Man for having deserved it, that so the boasting of the one may not be true, if he shou'd say that he hath merited Salvation ; Nor the Complaint of the other just, if he saith that he hath not merited Damnation.

*Ob-Oban.* This may be an Argument against Popery,

Popery in their way of holding Merits: But we hold no Merits: We say, tho' faithful promise makes just debt, so that if God pleased to promise Heaven upon the smallest Performance of the least Duty Imaginable, it is then, according to his promise, justly due to them that do it, yet they have not merited it; Because there is no proportion either of Congruity, or Condignity, between the Work and the Reward: Therefore that great Reward was wholly owing to the Free Grace of him that promised it, not to the Merit of the Work.

**Calvin.** You hold the Name of Election, but when you fix any Condition to it, you pervert the end of it, and Destroy the very Nature of it, making that Predestination which was ordain'd to the Praise of the Glory of God's Grace, to serve only the Honour of our own Free-will, since the Glorified Saints in Heaven, have by that Doctrine, no more whereof to thank God, than the wicked in Hell Torments: Because they have wrought out their own unequal Fortunes from an equal Grace; this cannot be from God's Grace, then, but their own Will, their own Merits, are their Determining Principle, and so you still give Man the Preheminence of God.

**Ch. Man.** This is certainly a most perverse and blind Construction, you, or your Tutors, make of it; Why shou'd'so good a Condition, as requiring Vertue, be so Dishonourable to God, if we Embrace that Condition, and chuse to perform it? Will no goodness be valuable, unless we be forced to it, whether we will or no? Is it Dishonourable to God to give us a Free-will, is it Dishonourable to God to make Vertue the Condition of the Reward, and Vice the Condition of the Punishment, and to give us a Free Choice, a Free-Will to chuse either side, Our Will must certainly be either free, or forced; and if we have no free-will

to do any the least good, then all we do of it, is forced upon us, whether we will or no, by an Irresistible Power; And even a Herd of Swine might be forced to Heaven that way. For you suppose if there be any thing of a Condition of Choice, and freedom of our own Will allow'd, 'tis Destroying the Glory of God, and serving the Honour of Our own Will. Is not God's Creating Man a Rational free Agent, able to chuse, and Live in Vertue, is not that I say the chief thing wherein the Image of his Maker consists? And have the Saints in Heaven, by this way, no more to thank God for, than the Damn'd in Hell? Most Monstrous Reasoning! Suppose a King shou'd graciously promise any one a Dukedom, for so little a Duty, as washing a poor Man's feet. He cannot say he has merited that Dukedom, by so small a Service; but it was wholly due to the King's Gracious Favour, tho' that little Homage was required. Has that Duke then no more to thank his Prince for, than some others that wou'd rather rot in Prison, than obey their Prince so far, as to wash a poor Man's Feet, and get a Dukedom, with their Princes Favour too?

Our own Merits you say must be our Determining Principle. What, is all Obedience Merits? They had best throw it all away then; For if we insist upon the Condition of Obedience, either in Works, or Faith it self, we still give Man the Preheminence of God, as you say.

If we through our Faith and Obedience in making use of God's Grace, are Saved, when others are lost for not using it, you say, *This cannot be from God's Grace, but from our own Will.* As if the Dukedom I spoke of, cou'd not be from the King's Grace or Favour, but from the Man's own Will, that washed the Poor Man's Feet. *They wrought out*, you say, *their unequal Fortunes from an equal Grace.* And what then? Did not he do so, that got the Dukedom, above those that chose to Rot in Goal, rather

then they would do that small Obedience to their Prince. And did he therefore owe no more Thanks to his Prince, than those Goal-Birds? Have not the Saved infinite reason Eternally to Love, Praise, and Admire, that Divine Goodness, that made their Duty so easy, and pleasant, and their Reward so infinitely over proportioned, and their whole Redemption so free and undeserved, and of so Inestimable a Price, as his Son's Blood. He that will deny this, may deny any thing. But Oh, have a care of that Dangerous Error, of working out your unequal Fortunes, with never so much Care, Fear, and Trembling. Tho' it is the Express Command of the Scripture, to *work out your own Salvation, with Fear and Trembling.* Phil. 2. 12. The next words says, *For it is God which worketh in you both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure.* 'Tis he that gives us of his good pleasure, preventing Grace to Incline our Wills to Goodness, and assisting Grace to enable us to do our work. Which shews, that we owe him all the Thanks of what we can attain to by our Works, even in working out our unequal Fortunes from an equal Grace.

If I bestow some Hundreds of Pounds on a poor Trades-Man to set him up, that by Trading industriously with it, he may raise his own Fortune, do's he not owe the Thanks of his Rising to me, it without that Money which I gave him, having before no Stock to begin with, he cou'd never have risen out of Poverty, with all his own Will and Endeavours. Does he not owe me Thanks, I say, notwithstanding that another whom I gave as much to, did not value it, but threw it away, drown'd it in the Sea, and gave no thanks for it, as thinking it nothing worth, and so remain'd a Beggar: But tho' these two wrought out their unequal Fortunes for an equal Sum given them; Does the First therefore owe me no thanks for all my Money, which  
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has made him all his Fortune? Then the Servants in our Saviour's Parable too, ow'd the Lord no Thanks for his Talents, and for all the Citys he made them Rulers over, because another hid his Talent, and would not use it. This is such Bantering Sophistry as an Honest Man shou'd be ashamed of.

**Calvin.** Was it not their Lord gave the Will and the Power, to them in that Parable, to do those good things, which Will be did not give to the other.

**Ch. Man.** Where have we the least hint of such a thing in the whole Parable? Our Saviour brought it, to shew the difference that shall be made between those that chuse to do well, and those that chuse to be Sloathful, Idle, and Wicked. And what was it that made their Lord accept, reward, and prefer those, before the unprofitable, sloathful one, but because they did those things which he did not, their own doings wrought their unequal Fortunes. The worst had a Tallent given him, but wou'd not use it. And if it had been as you surmise, might not he have justly reason'd with his Lord, and said, Lord you forced, or empower'd them to do what they did, but you did not impower me, else I wou'd have done it as well as they.

**Calvin.** But whatever may be said for the Saints, having by your way, some reason to thank God, yet I am sure they have infinitely more reason to thank him, for freely choosing them, of his own meer pleasure, without any motive, than to chuse them for any reason or thing observable in them.

**Ch. Man.** But I think it is so far otherwise, that on the contrary they have much more reason to thank the Divine Goodness, as we state the Case, of the Saints. As for Example, suppose you were to chuse a Wife among many young Ladys, that wou'd each think them happy that cou'd get you; and none of them are in your Judgment one jot better



better than the other; yet self-love makes each of them think themselves the fittest: But you at random, without any Motive, but just as if it were done Blindfold, lay hold upon one, and reject the rest. Now this unaccountable Arbitrary Dealing, in confessing that you regarded no Motives that cou'd respect any of them, wou'd it not give less occasion of thankfulness, and return of Love, in your New Wife; and be less acceptable to her, than if you had chosen her with some respect to some Vertue, or agreeable Quality, that you were pleased with in her; which even your self had taught her, and she willingly Learned, but the rest wou'd not. She shou'd owe you an additional thanks then, not only for chusing her, but for qualifying her first to be chosen, and consequently loving her before you chose her: Which it must be supposed you did not, according to your way; but hated her like the rest, all being alike odious to you before your chusing. Even so we think the Saints of God owe an Additional Debt of thanks to their Gracious Lord, for quallifying them first to be chosen; by his Blessed Doctrine, and his preventing and assisting Grace, which because the others wou'd not use, they were therefore lost. Have not these therefore more reason still, for additional thanks to his Infinite Goodness, for his having not only so loved them, but even all their whole Kin, and kind; so loved the whole World, that he redeem'd them all by his Son's Death, and desired the Salvation of all. *Was not willing that any shou'd Perish.* 2. Pet. 3. 9. *But wou'd have all Men be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth.* 1. Tim. 2. 4. And it was only their refusing to be saved, lost them, that are lost: For God freely loved them all, as long as they wou'd endure his love. And do not even the Saints in Heaven owe him the more thanks for this, than they cou'd for any Arbitrariness.

Calvin.

**Calvin.** Well, but I know this opinion of yours is an old opinion, which has been always opposed and Condemn'd Publickly. And I take it to be Demonstratively false in it self. And St. Paul may say what he will; if this Doctrine be true, Salvation is not of God *that sheweth Mercy, but of him that willesh, and runneth,* believeth, and worketh.

**Ch-Man.** The first part is true, that it is an Old Opinion, all the Eldest Fathers and Blessed Martyrs believed it; And it is as true, that it has been always in these latter Ages opposed, and Condemn'd Publickly by some; And so has all the truth of Scripture. And you take it to be Demonstratively false in it self: So do the Deists take the whole Scripture to be, with as good perverse Reasons as you give for your self, that is abusing some Scripture Phrases, and pretending the praise of the Glory of God's Grace, which the Deists themselves do pretend also, to Vindicate God from from that Odium, they say the Pretended Revelations of Scripture do lay on him. And they fetch many of their Arguments from this Novel Doctrine of Absolute Decrees, fatal Necessities, and the rest of the links of the same chain, of that new Fangled Theology, which calls it self Orthodox.

You say, St. Paul may say what he will, if this Doctrine be true, Salvation is not of God *that sheweth Mercy, but rather of him that willesh and runeth,* believeth and worketh. Now you must know St. Paul did not name *Salvation* there, but was Speaking of the Gentiles being allow'd a call to the Gospel, which was, a special Priviledge the Jewish Christians thought shou'd be kept to themselves only, and that God shou'd not give that Mercy to Gentiles. The Jews thought that wou'd be unrighteous in God, because themselves only were the Children of the Promise, and they cou'd  
not

not endure to hear of the Gentiles, but look'd on them as Reprobates; and for them St. Paul was always Pleading, as being himself the Apostle of the Gentiles. Rom. 9. 14. *God is not unrighteous for* (as the next verse has it) *he will have Mercy on whom he will have Mercy*, the next verse says, *So then it is not of him that Willeth, nor of him that Runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy*. Not of him that Willeth to have the Gospel Dispensation, thus or thus, nor of him that runneth to take all the Blessing to himself, as *Evan* that came running also for the Blessing; but the whole ordering of this Dispensation will be of God, to shew such Mercy of *Distributing the Gospel*, where he pleases. And what has this to do with the thing you bring it for? Where you make *willing* and *running*, to be believing and working; but that is not true.

This Ninth Chapter of the *Romans* is a thing you do not understand, and how can you understand these Intricate Disputes of St. Paul, when you do not take with you the Commentaries, or Homilies of St. *Chrysostom*, nor the earliest Fathers, nor yet the most learned and approved Commentators of your own Church (if your Episcopal Church be your own Church, as I suppose it is, or shou'd be now) such as Dr. *Harwood*, Dr. *Whitby*, Dr. *Patrick*, &c. from whom you wou'd learn that sense I deliver about that Chapter, and the rest of those places *hard to be understood*; and wou'd wholly alter your Scheme. But to catch at single Sentences, to justify seemingly, a most unreasonable Theory, against the whole Tenure of the Scripture, and Human Understanding too, is very rash; tho' you follow therein some designing Heads; that are none of your own Church now. But suppose after all, that Sentence cou'd mean as you would have it; we do allow that Salvation It self, is not Originally of him that believeth, nor of him that worketh, but

but principally of God that sheweth Mercy; for if Christ, and Grace, and the Gospel, had not been of God's meer love, and free mercy given us, we could neither believe, nor work, as we ought, nor would all we could do signify any thing. I know not what you would have more of us; but to believe your unreasonable Sifters, we cannot; and must for ever oppose it.

**Calvin.** I have Two Scriptures to propose to you here, first a Question, *Is there unrighteousness with God?* Rom. 9. 14. And the other an Exclamation, in the XI. Chap. Ver. 33. *O the Depth of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God!* Both these joyned together, teach us, that since there is no Injustice in God, we should not search the Cause, but admire the Depth of his Wisdom. Whole Judgments are unsearchable, and his Ways past finding out.

**Ch-Man.** As to your Question, is there Unrighteousness with God? I answer no, by no means. But truly your way strikes hardest at it; and has made many one ask that Question. As to the other Text, *O the Depth.* To shew you how improperly you apply this Text to your Cause, and how ignorant you are of your own Churches sense of this place, I need only Transcribe Dr. Hammond's Paraphrase on that Verse, which is this, *O the Depth of the abundant goodness of God, in bearing the Contumacy of the Gentiles first, and then of the Jews; and of his Wisdom in making the Desertion of the Jews a means of calling the Gentiles; and of his Knowledge in knowing how (probably) to work upon the most obstinate Jews, viz. by Envy, and Emulation towards the Gentiles, as also by those heavy Calamities, that according to Christ's Prediction, fell upon those Jews; how unsearchable are his Determinations; and how admirable his ways of bringing them to pass.* Now what has all this, which only Concern'd the two different Nations Priviledges, or Oeconomies; Jews and Gentiles; what has this, I say, to do with

the pretence of God's absolute unconditional Election, of some to Heaven, even out of the very same Nation, Nay, and Family; whereof he rejects others to Hell, without shewing any Reason, but unaccountable Arbitrary Will. No Man can think this so admirable a Depth of the Riches of Goodness, or Wisdom, as an Equitable Distribution of Rewards and Punishments, according to some known Measures, whereby they that come short of the Rewards of others, may know the reason of the Discrimination, and have their Mouths stop'd, by the cause of the difference made between them, lying at their own Door.

**Calvin.** Well. I cou'd refer you to those that are more Learned than either of us. But take heed you do not meet with those that are too presumptuous; and such are those that hold a Conditional Election, as if they were the Forerunners of the Second coming of Christ, endued with the Spirit of Elias, they cast down every Hill, and fill up every Valley, pretending to make every thing that seems crooked straight, and whatsoever is rough, smooth and plain. Though but Lambs, they can easily Wade, where Elephants the Fathers of the Primitive Church found such Pits and Pools, as they were glad to Swim.

**Calvin.** And so I must have no Recourse to the Learned of our own Church, who all hold that dangerous Error, but must look for, some of the more Learned Disciples of Mr. *Calvin* perhaps, or of some other Foreign Churches that your self has follow'd, who hold the Absolute Unconditional Decree.

It is certain, they that do make plain the way of the Lord, have more of the Spirit of Elias in them, than they that Multiply difficulties, on pretence of advancing mighty Profound Depths, and unintelligible high Mysteries; for every flight of Sublime Nonsense can pretend to that; and we know the Devil's



Devil's Oracles pretended most to Inscrutable Mysteries. But the Scripture says, *The Word is nigh thee*—Rom. 10. 8. *He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love Mercy, &c.* Micah. 6. 8. *Knowledge is easy,* 1. Prov. 4. 6. *My Yoke is easy,* says Christ. Matth. 11. 30. *The Way saving Man shall not Err therein.* Isai. 35. 8. But I must caution you, those are indeed the truly Presumptuous, whom your Invidious Discription fits best, about *Lambs and Elephants*, if you a little Reverse it; for it's true, they do not, as they that wou'd, *make plain the way of Christ shou'd*, but raise Mountains of difficulties, and make such Pits, and Pools, Depths, and Quicklands, as neither Christ's Lambs, nor the Devil's Elephants can get thorow. *Hobbs* his Leviathan is a Witness of this, who builds all his Atheistical Blasphemy on the Fatal Decrees; and was the cunningest and greatest Defender that Doctrine ever had. And the Learned World is now grown Ashamed of that Cause you hold to, tho' the Sistematical Divines that yet stick to it, with their New Divinity, think themselves the only Learned, Pious, and Orthodox Men.

**Calvin.** What is there in your Doctrine, that is not easie, obvious, and open, if God hath diversly determined of none but such as are of divers and different Merits. And what room is there left for *St. Paul's* Exclamation, *O the Depth*? He that can Assign a Cause of our Election, takes away all Cause of that Exclamation; because none do admire an Effect, but they that are ignorant of the Cause. And I am sure we must all here be ignorant of it; when we consider that there is not the same regard had of those that are in the same Case, but that the one is left in his own State of Perdition, and the other Rescued by Love, without a Cause, at least, that we can find out.

**Ch-Man.** I shew'd you already the improper application of that Sentence, *O the Depth!* to your Cause. *But do none admire an Effect, but they that are ignorant of the Cause.* That is not true, I do admire the Beauty and Contrivance of this Lower World, and yet I am not ignorant of the Cause of it, who is God blessed for ever, I admire Vertue and Goodness above all things that I see, and yet I know the cause of it is God's Grace, which he has wonderfully bestowed upon Mortals. I admire also, above all things, the most Prodigious Depths of God's Unexpressible, Nay, Unconceivable Goodness, Kindness, Love, and Regard to poor Mortal Mankind: So that I am even Astonished at it when I Meditate on it, and do think *David's* Expression too little (tho' I cannot tell what to say better) *Lord what is Man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man that thou so regardest him.* I admire also, beyond Measure, the Depth of God's Unsearchable Wisdom, in his very Providential Government of this World, to pass by his First Creation of it; and above all again, the Stupendious Unfathomable Wisdom, and Goodness, Nay, Incomprehensible by Angels (which things says the Scripture. *The Angels desire to look into.* 1. Pet. 1. 12,) of the Method and Ways God found out for the Redemption of Fallen Mankind, by his Son's Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, &c. And all this so suitable to Infinite Justice, as well as Infinite Mercy, and Goodness, that we can Judge our selves how his ways are exactly Equal, Just, Wise, Good, and Merciful, beyond Comparison.

Is not all this enough to make us join with St. Paul, *O the Depth!* Must that Exclamation be quire lost, unless we join in this Cross grain'd way of denying our selves to be endued with the Power of Rational Free Agents, and deny that we are to be layed through any Condition, of Faith in Christ,

or

or Obedience to him, but by absolute unconditional Election, without any Regard to our Life or Actions; make God Arbitrary, and our Selves but meerly Passive, like Machins, Stocks, or Stones, who could then do as much to please God, as we can: For if God gave the Word of Command, they cou'd co-operate too. Thereby we shou'd destroy the Dignity of Human Nature, which consists in the Image of God, and leave our Selves in a wilderness of Doubts and Darknes; if there be no Terms or Conditions of our Election, but that it must be by hidden, absolute, and arbitrary Decrees. If this must be the great *Depth*, to determine the Event of our Eternal Condition, exclusive of all we can do, and to destroy the Freedom of our Will, and Liberties of our Actions, I Pray God, it be not one of the *Depths of Satan*, as the Scripture speaks.

And is there no way to admire God's Method of Saving us, but by making it an unintelligible Scheme, that we may be confounded with its want of Reason, and praise most for rare, unintelligible Depths and Mysteries, that which has least Sense in it, and no Use for it. This is the Popish way, that Sets up the Mystery of Transubstantiation; and would justify it by Comparison with the Mystery of the Trinity, as the only Mystery they cou'd find to fasten on, which they thought seem'd contrary to Human Reason; but it is not so, and is one of the most useful Articles to Influence our good Life and Practice. But for absolute Unconditional Decrees, for each particular Person's Salvation, without Foresight of, or Respect to, any Faith or Obedience, as it is not (God be thanked) in our Creed, so it is of no more Use than Transubstantiation; but wou'd, perhaps, equally hinder the Conversion of Rational Infidels to Christianity, were it Incorporated with our Religion.

Pray

Pray how do you like Dr. *Pierce's* *Corpusculum Theologicum Pacificum*, which I lent you.

*Calvin*. Not at all do I like it, 'tis a Childish Book. It wou'd represent Theology, and all Christian Religion, as a plain and easy thing: whereas it is a great Abstruse Mystery. *O the Depth, &c.* and 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Without Controversy, Great is the Mystery of Godliness.*

*Ch-Man*. That Book is a most Learn'd Rational Brier of True Divinity, according to the way of the Church of *England*; of which Church, Dr. *Pierce* is acknowledged to have been one of the most excellently Learned in his time. But I suppose, you think his Book so Childish, because it is so Intelligible, that Young Students might easily understand it; but perhaps the Mystery of Sublime Nonsense is admirable. They that think it so, let them enjoy it. I shall always endeavour, with God's help, to make the Religion of Christ Plain, and Easy, when I Teach any thing of it. And I think it is so Easy, if it be but right Taught, *That the Way faring Man shall not err therein.* But you would have all Unintelligible Mystery, *O the Depth, &c.* And, *without Controversy, Great is the Mystery of Godliness.* 1 Tim. 3. 16. Read the Verse out, and you will see all the Mystery in it.

It you can Convince me, like a Friend, that I am any way out of the Truth, or whether in it or no, that I differ any way from the Church that Intrusts me, I will hold my Tongue; for I think, that in Conscience, both you and I shou'd Learn from Her, and not from Forreigners; but especially from Her Chiefest Prelates, and Doctors, now living, and of the last Age; whose Learned Works are Extant, and Universally approved by Her, and Recommended to all that are to Receive Her Instructions, and Orders. Which Authors, if you had Meditated as much in, as in Forreign Writers, or rather

rather much more, as you ought, you, and I, would have no Difference.

But now in this very Point we Dispute on the late Healing Attempts, made by our good Arch-Bishop of Dublin, is well known, and you had the Perusing of it, and told me, the Dissenters were well satisfied with it; I wonder then it did not satisfy you. The Arch-Bishop, all along asserts, That no sort of Divine Predestination, can take away the Freedom of our Wills, nor Liberty of Events, and says (Page 34.) That God *expresseth his Tenderness towards us, and how far he is from imposing any thing on us, less us know, that he has left us our own Freedom and Choice.* And to convince us of his Impartiality, Declares, That he Acts as a Just and Equal Judge, *that he hath no Respect of Persons; and Rewards none but Rewards and Punishes all Men.* And according to his own Pleasure, but according to their Deserts. And again (Page 37.) That he has given us Free Will, that we might be capable of Rewards at his Hands, and have the Pleasure of abusing for our Selves, which only can make us happy, and like unto Himself, in the most Noble Operations of which, a being is capable. Thus He said this is, in your Sense, A *growing Man* the Pre-eminence of God. No doubt, the Arch-Bishop is in your Eyes (as all the rest of our Bishops are) Popish, Pelagian, Semipelagian, Arminian, &c. &c. Calvin. Now you speak of the Arch-Bishop, does not he say, That you ought not to Charge the Doctrine of Divine Precedence, or Predestination, with ill Consequences, that do not really follow from them.

Cy. Span. Very True. And all Wise, and Good, or Charitable Men, would be, and ought to be, very loath to Charge such Consequences, and the reason they do not follow from the Doctrine of Precedence is, because People do not understand right what Precedence is in God. But when People will pretend



pretend to understand it, and nothing will serve them, but to Infer and Own such wild Consequences from them, by taking away Free Will, and all Power in us to do Good, &c. How can we avoid Answering their Arguments, and shewing them their Mistakes? The Arch Bishop has done it by shewing their Ignorance of that Divine Attribute. And those that will not Acquiesce in that (as it seems you do not) we must oppose with those bad Consequences, your selves do deduce, and shew you the Malignity of them: And the False Meanings you put upon those Scripture Texts you Abuse. This is our necessary Duty, in Defence of the Truth, and of our Holy Church, which you so Asperse and Affront, and call all Her Bishops, and Doctors, so many Names, for Teaching Free Will, Conditional Election, &c.

**Calvin.** But cannot God, the Sovereign Lord and Maker of all, do what he pleases with his own Creatures?

**Ch. Man.** That's True. But the Question is not what God can do, but what he will do, and has Revealed, he will do with us, his Rational Creatures. We say, That he will give us our Choice, do this and live, that he will enable our Wills, to accept this Choice, if we please, that he will Reward us, if we will take the right Side, which he would have us take, and Punish us if we do not. And we also say, That God cannot do every thing; that he cannot, Consistently with the Goodness and Mercy of his Nature, Punish poor Creatures, for not doing what he gave them no Means of doing, like Beating your Gardener for not Digging, whilst you keep the Spade and all Instruments from him.

**Calvin.** We do not make the Will of God Irrational. For tho' there be no absolute Cause of his Will, yet his Will is a reasonable Cause of all

all other things, and it would be very unreasonable to believe, that he should want Reason for what he doth, since he doth all things according to the Council of his own Will.

**Ch. Man.** We do not Question, but God has Reason for whatever he does in the Council of his own Will, but how is it proved that there is in the Council of his Will, such an absolute unconditional Election to Heaven of every saved Christian, as takes away all freedom of the Will of Man, and all choice of his own, or power to make, or marr, the event of his own Actions. What if we say, you do not understand the Council of God's Will? And that this is not in the Council of his Will, but that God is slander'd thereby? God does not conceal the Council of his Will from us, in his way of Saving or Damning us; but would have us see the Equitableness, not the Arbitrariness, of his proceedings with us. So that this is not fair, but is much more like Sophistry, than what you often unjustly call so; First, to take it for granted, that there is such a thing in the Council of the Divine Will, as Men commonly count very unreasonable, and which you your self cannot clear by Reason; and then prove it is, and must be, Reasonable; because nothing can be in the Council of the Divine Will, but what is Reasonable; but that this is there, is the thing we deny, and you have not proved, nor ever will prove.

I shall now desire your Answer to this one Question. How will you Convince a wicked Hypocrite, that follows and loves his Sins well; but Plays the Dissembler, and Counterfeits himself to be of the Godly-Party? Suppose I am such an one, how will you make me Self-condemned, or shew me the absolute necessity of a better Life, or the impossibility of being Saved without it, for if

there be a possibility of being Saved without it, there is no absolute necessity of following a better Life. Let us see, I say, how by your Principles, you can Evid<sup>t</sup> or Convince me, whilst I hold your Doctrine.

**Calvin.** How ! Why, I say, *The unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God* : There are Texts enough of that sort, for the same.

**Ch-Man.** I own that. But how will you prove me to be of the Number of the unrighteous ? for tho' I live in wicked Sins, yet the Number of the righteous that are to be Saved, are only such as were absolutely without any Condition Predestinated to Heaven, before they were Born, without any regard to Works, or so much as upon fore-sight of them ; Christ will impute his own Righteousness to them ; and we shoud not strive to be a sharer with him in our Salvation. I perform the Duty of Saving Faith ; for I believe firmly, that I am absolutely Elected, and I soly rely on the Mercy of my God, who has freely Predestinated me for Heaven, in his own Eternal Decrees.

**Calvin.** But I say, The signs of that Election, are in doing the Duties of a good Life, and avoiding all willful and gross Sins.

**Ch-Man.** So it is : But that Election has not always those signs at present : And those Duties of Works, are not our own doings, but only the doings of the irresistable Grace of the Omnipotent God, who has also Decreed the means, as absolutely as he has the end ; and has Decreed also, what time he will do it, even when he pleases ; and that may be the Day, or the Hour before my Death.

**Calvin.** But you cannot be sure to your self, of your own Election, so as to satisfy your own mind about it, till you forsake all Sin, and live a good Life.

**Ch-Man.**

**Ch-Man.** My mind is satisfy'd already, by the firm Belief of my Election, and by my Faith in Christ, and my Trust in the sole Mercy of God only: For to trust to Works, for my own assurance it self, is Popery. Nor can that make me sure at all; for many a one that is Predestinated to be Damn'd, in the first Eternal Decree of Preterition, may at present live a better Life than I do, and be Damn'd for all that, and Dye in a final Ill Life; for God has pre-ordain'd the means still, as well as the end, on both sides, on his Damnation, as well as my Salvation: Altho' to all appearance he may seem by his present good Life, rather to be Elect than I; yet that is but a false appearance, and I might still be in an ill Case, tho' my Life were now as good as his. So that the Life is no sure sign, neither of one side or t'other. And what great matter is it to get that sort of assurance by Works, when it is but a slippery thing, and the first decreed Event will certainly happen, whatever Assurance, or Non-assurance, my flattering Works can give me: which are but polluted Appendages when all's done.

**Calvin.** But you are bound to leave off those Sins you follow, and to strive after a good life, by all means, be diligent at Church, Harken to the good word of God, frequent Prayers, both Publick and Private. You are bound to be devout, if you be one of the Elect of God.

**Ch-Man.** That I am one of the Elect, I told you I do not doubt in the least; I have that true and saving Faith, And for Preaching I can attend to that Heartily: For how severely soever you wou'd seem to handle me now, I get comfort enough from the Orthodox Sermons of those precious healing Spirited Preachers that are of our way, after the purity of Godly Mr. Calvin, that Blessed Man of God, and happy Interpreter of Holy

Scriptures. I can pray Fervently too, Especially in the Spiritual Extemporary way, as the Spirit gives utterance, which makes me also infallibly sure of Grace and Election: But for the Sins of the Flesh, 'tis true, *I do the things which I would not.* And I find I cannot do otherwise, my lusts are too strong for me. And I think no Man is bound to Impossibilities. I can do nothing good of my self, 'tis God's Irresistible Grace must do all in me, and I do not find that is yet come. I wait with patience for it, and do firmly believe that Omnipotent Spirit will come one day, with the Irresistible force of Grace, when it self pleases; Mean while I must be as I am; And 'tis but Uncharitable Usage of me, in any one to think to disturb me, or drive me towards despair about my own condition, for I know that I have heretofore had good and sure signs (as I have been taught) of Saving Grace, having sometimes done such things as could not be done but by Grace, and as I am sure there is no falling from Grace, finally, or totally; tho' I may for some time be *Sold under Sin*, as long as God pleases.

Thus I cou'd Eternally dispute in defence of a present ill Life, by those Principles; Nor know I how these Arguments cou'd be Confuted; without first denying and overturning those Principles of yours, and your Learned Tutors, about Absolute Election, Irresistible Grace, no falling from Grace, Justification without good Works, Conversion in an Instant, no Free-will, Fatality of Events, &c.

The only Answer I can foresee to this, must be as you use to do; that is, to cry, Sophistry, Sophistry, where you cannot otherwise Reply. Just at the Papists use to deal with us, in all their battled Causes. But these last Arguments for defence of Ill Life, by the Absolute Predestinarian's Doctrine, are so far from Sophistry, that it is the

Natural



Natural Issue of Common Reason, and there is scarce a poor Man that knows but how to sell a Pig in a Market, but can Argue thus with himself, if ever he has been Taught the Absolute Predestinarian Scheme, which makes it most necessary ( in this wicked Age especially ) for all true Hearted Christians Cordially to oppose it. For you may see by all this, that what I told you already is most true, that Hypocrisy upon Principles is more deadly than the greatest Debauchery against Principles.

**Calvin.** What, is not Dissolute Debauchery more Hateful, more Scandalous, and more Infectious to the World, than a private Hypocrisy less seen?

**Ch-Man.** But the Infection of Hypocrisy, where it takes, is more killing. 'Tis true, open barefaced Debauchery seems more odious to Men, as being more Publickly Scandalous, because Hypocrisy conceals its worst side, as well as it can; but this, where-ever it Infects, is much more deadly and incurable, as baffling all the true Principles that the Cure shou'd be built on, and instead of that, having rooted False Principles to feed and support the Disease. And therefore in the sight of God, who sees the Heart, this Hypocrisy is much more odious and abominable, than the other Debauchery. 'Tis the greatest Punishment that is threaten'd by our Saviour, to any, even to the Drunken Debauchees that misruled his own House, who deserved greater Punishment than other Debauchees, that he wou'd appoint him his Portion with the Hypocrites. Matth. 24. 51.

**Calvin.** But is not the Doctrine of Divine Predestination, most comfortable to the Faithful?

**Ch-Man.** We acknowledge, there is a great deal of precious Comfort in the right Doctrine of Divine Predestination, but when I strain'd to your Way, so as to own the denying our liberty of choosing

chusing Good or Evil, casting away freedom of Will, determining of Events, without our power to direct them, one way or t'other : And when this is declared to be the meaning of your sort of absolute Decrees, and unconditional Election to Heaven, without any fore-sight of, or regard to, Faith, or obedience in the least : How this Doctrine is so Comfortable, I am not able to comprehend ; I am sure, it much discomforts many a poor honest Christian, when they happen to fall into some fits of those *Desertions*, (as you call them) which sets them a-gog upon the Astrological Star-gazing of their Teachers, and the Decrees of Heaven must be pryed into, about their Absolute Election : And the terror hazard of their Names, not being by Original Fate written in the Book of Life, often makes even innocent Livers Hang, and Drown, and Cut their own Throats. These Fits of *Desertions*, are sometimes as natural to People of that strain, as Fits of Raving are to Drunkards ; when weak Heads are Intoxicated with Absolute Fatal Decrees, instead of Comfort, it oftener sets them at their Wits end. And when poor harmless Souls, in a Melancholy Fit, fall into the thoughts of Absolute Reprobation, or which is all one, *Præterition*, being past on them by their ill Stars, where the great Comfort of this Way lies, the Lord knows ; If there be such wonderful Comfort in it, I own that I am such a Block-Head, that I cannot perceive it ; unless it be that I am Reprobated, and so cannot come to the knowledge of the Truth ; but am forced to fall in with the Popery, Pelagianism, Semipelagianism, Arminianism, and the rest of the Church of England Heresies, against the Orthodox Fatalists. In my poor Opinion, it would be much more Comfort to me, that God may have Graciously left it in my power to hinder (if I be not wanting to my self) this dreadful Reprobation, or

*Præterition :*

**Præterition:** And to obtain by my diligent grateful Endeavours, in Faith and Obedience, through the Love of my Blessed Saviour, that my Name may be written in the Book of Life, and by my Perseverance continued there, till the Day of Judgment, *When the Books shall be open'd.* Rev. 20. 12. *And the Dead shall be Judged out of those things which are written in the Books.* Now, that is, the same Verse tells us, not according to any secret Arbitrary Decrees, but according to their Works: The frequentest Expression about our Final Judgment in all the Scripture. And this Judgment is so attemperated with Mercy, for Christ's sake, that Sincerity will be accepted instead of Perfection, and nothing shall Condemn me but a Final Impenitent Wicked Life in Christianity, Christ has paid for all the rest of my Defects; and what Blesseder Comfort can I have than this? So that those of your way, when they are even in their best Lucid Intervals, can have no more Comfort, than we have just and steady Grounds to have constantly.

**Calvin.** But is not our sense of Predestination most agreeable to the Holy Scriptures?

**Ch-Man.** No, that is the chief thing which we deny, and you never prove; but with some illusive wrested Phrases, and difficult Passages, which, if your Sense be allowed, do make Contradictions to the whole Current of Plain Scriptures, and you never Answer our Explications, nor our Numerous Plain Proofs, to the contrary, nor our clear Arguments from Reason and Equity. But the same way do the Papists say that their Doctrine is most agreeable to the Express Word of God, in the Holy Scriptures: But when they come to Prove it, they use much what the same Artifice as you do, in fastening upon some difficult places, without heeding the Scope and Design of the Holy Writers; I do not reckon this Perverting of Scripture to

to be Willful in you, as it is in the Papists; but you have been unhapily led by the Course of your Forreign Studies, into Schemes that were first Leavel'd to Batter the Episcopal Churches, and Draw their Subjects from them; and you do not see thorow that Design, nor are you aware of the Mischief it may do your self; Which I am heartily sorry for, and wish I knew how to prevent.

**Calvin.** Is not this a True State of God's Dealing with us; most agreeable to the Scripture; That when he had Decreed the Redemption of Fallen-Man by a Saviour, and to make a Second Covenant with him in Christ. God fore-seeing that these Gracious Measures of Restoring Man wou'd prove Uneffectual to all Persons, through the Strength of Natural Corruption, and that none of them wou'd ever of himself believe in Christ, and Repent, out of the Superfluence of his Goodness did vouchsafe to Confer upon such Persons, as it pleas'd him to fix upon, such special Measure of his Grace, which shou'd effectually work in them Faith and Perseverance unto Salvation. This is the Election, especially spoken of in the Holy Scriptures, which being a Decree of the good pleasure of God, without any thing on the Part of Man, to deserve it, cannot be called but Absolute: And consequently the Decree of Reprobation must be nothing else but the Direliction or Præterition of the rest in their Deserved Ruin, through their Obstinacy and Unbelief.

**Ch. Man.** The Decree of giving Man Grace was Absolute, and from the good pleasure of God, there being nothing on Man's Part to deserve it; but the Decree of Saying him was Conditional upon his using that Grace, your Error lies in this, that you confine all God's Grace wholly to such particular Persons as God pleas'd to fix upon for such a special Measure, as should effectually work in them

Faith

Faith and Perseverance unto Salvation. Whereas the Scripture says, *The Grace of God has appear'd unto all Men.* Tit. 2. 11. And that as in Adam all dy'd, so in Christ should all be made alive. I wish you had read Dr. Sillingfleet's Intent of Christ's Death and Satisfaction against *Crollius*. Or Read but the Preface to the whole *Duty of Man*, which I once entreated you, but I suppose you have not, or not with any Attention. (For that's a Childish Book too) Yet therein you will find the True State of the Two Covenants with Mankind: And how can those that are pass'd by, deserve Ruin by the Terms of the Second Covenant? As you say they do, through their Obstinacy, which must be against Grace; when (as you suppose) there was no Grace given them.

**Calvin.** If all those to whom the Gospel is Preached were capable to embrace it, by the Common Grace given them; then there would be no need of Election at all.

**Episcop.** That does not follow. For after the Gospel is Preached, and that they have ability given them to Embrace it, if they will, then if they obey it, they shall be Elected to Heaven; *many are called, but few are chosen.* They must first be called, and then chosen. Your mistake proceeds upon this, that you still take every Election to be the Absolute Enlisting them for Heaven: Whereas there is an Election of whole Nations first. To such a special Privilege, as having the Gospel Preached to them, and this may be *Absolute*; but then the Particular Election to Heaven, is only of those that Embrace it, and that is always *Conditional* on their Faith and Repentance. This Election to Heaven you will say perhaps, was before the Gospel was Preached; but I say if it was so, it was upon Foresight of that, and of their Obedience to it.

**Calvin.** You do not consider that all the Difficulties



faculties which occur in this Mystery, proceed, for the most part, from your Confused Conception of things; And that if they were once set in their Natural order, much of your Puzzle therein might be avoided. You should observe then, that God First Decrees the outward call of the Gospel. Then because he foresees no Man can receive it, he Decrees to give the inward call to some that he pleases to Pick out, no whit better than the rest, and so Elect them Absolutely; And then Decrees to leave the rest, to the outward call only; by his Preterition, or passing them by. We must not say that God first Elects, and Reprobates Men, and after gives them the Gospel. But that the Decree of Preaching the Gospel precedes both that of Election and Reprobation, and these do follow that.

**Ch-Man.** Well, but after all this, I do not see, how your clear distinguishing Head, that can set things so in order, does at all remove any of the Puzzle, as you call it. Would it not be hard that God pretending to shew favour to poor Mortals, by Inviting them to the Gospel of his Son, thro' the Preaching of it to the World, shou'd yet seem to have no other design, but to bring most of them into a Crime by their refusing it. For indeed that would be the Consequence of Preaching it to them that cannot by any means receive it, and yet shall have it Preached to them, in order to their Reprobation; that so they might be Conditionally Reprobated, refusing the Condition of the Gospel.

**Calvin.** We Answer, that when God calls Man in time by the Outward Preaching of the Gospel, he Intends the same thing which he Intended from all Eternity, when he Decreed to call them. But when we conceive that he made that Decree, we must think that he Intended all that a Legislator can Reasonably Intend when he Establisheth a Law, which is to Explain to Men their Duty

Duty, to press their Duty upon them, to promise Salvation to all those that will return to him, to threaten Death and Perdition to all those that will continue in Impenitence; And lastly to Judge all According to that Law. A Legislator goes no farther, he is wholly Confined in the matter of Right; He doth not regard the matter of Fact, otherwise than to Command, and Protest it, but doth not decide of the Event. It is as a Supreme Director that God Determines the Events, and not as Legislator. And still Remember that Preaching of the Gospel goes before, and Reprobation follows after; which things put together makes the difficulty wholly to vanish away, if you set your thoughts thus in right order, without confusion of Ideas.

**Ch-Man.** Verily, and indeed, I wonder at this Extraordinary Answer, Especially at the Learned Distinction between the Legislator, and the Supreme Director. But did ever any Just Legislator give Laws impossible to be in any job performed without Helps or Instruments, and yet as Supreme Director decree to withhold helps & Instruments from them he gives the Laws to. When the Supreme Legislator, and Supreme Director, are both the same Person, what signifies the Distinction? What strange Reasoning is this, that the Director must make impertinent and void the reasonable Intent and Design of the Legislator. Suppose you have three or four Gard'ners, and you as a Legislator to them, have made the Laws or Rules how your Gardens shall be order'd, and what Work they shall do, and how they shall be rewarded if they do so, and so, or punished if they do not. Thus you are Legislator, and have done very reasonably; then presently you turn the Scene, lay aside the being Supream Legislator about the Work, and become a Supream Director, and as such will allow one of the Gardiners means to perform the Work you Commanded as Legislator, but to the rest you will give no

Tools, Instruments, nor any Possibility to do any thing of the Work; but yet will Insist on the Punishments for not doing it, which you ordained as Legislator. And if this be Complained of, you'll say you do this, not as you were Legislator, but as you are now Supreme Director, and so (as you tell us) all the difficulty quite vanishes away, if we set our Thoughts thus in right Order, and do not scatter our Brains with Confusion of Ideas. Now how Philosophically soever this Answer does satisfy them that have Logick enough to understand it. I confess my self so dull, that I cannot yet see, by any means, how the difficulty is removed; but do really think, *Tigre tu patule, &c.* would remove it as well. And how do you remove this difficulty, which many do Object; that is, would it not seem a Mockery and Unsincere in God, to invite and call them to the Gospel who are Rejected for Reprobates?

**Calvin.** It takes the difficulty quite away, to consider the Order I told you God's Decrees shou'd be placed in; that they are first Called, and afterwards Reprobated. The Decree of the outward Preaching of the Gospel, ought to be conceived before that of Election, and consequently before that of Reprobation. He first gives them his Gospel Preached to them. Then seeing the Blindness of Men is such, that they do, and will continue in their Corruption, he chuses some to give them his Holy Spirit, and to save them. And leaves the rest in their obstinacy. Which makes the difficulty wholly to vanish away.

**Ch-Man.** But does not the difficulty continue still, if he earnestly and passionately, with all seeming fervor and concern, Invites and Calls to himself, those that he knows cannot stir one Foot, they are Bolted, Fetter'd and Chain'd to the Place, and he will not let one of their Feet be loosed, nor let

let them any way be enabled to stir. And yet he  
cries, Come unto me and I will receive you. How  
oft wou'd I have gather'd you as a Hen her Chickens,  
and ye wou'd not. Turn your selves and hear, For  
why will ye die? As I live, I have no pleasure in  
the death of him that dyeth. Behold, I set before you  
life and death, therefore chuse life. God would have  
all Men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the  
truth; 1 Tim. 2. 4. The Lord is not willing  
that any should Perish, but that all should come to Re-  
pentance. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Does not this seem a mode-  
ry, and insincere, towards those that can no  
more stir to that purpose, than Stones, till they  
have the means given them, Grace to free them;  
but that they never have; but whilst he is thus  
earnestly Courting them, he only gives them in  
the Learn'd Orthodox Word, a Prescription, that is  
in plain English, he gives them a go-by. What  
decency is this to put on our Gracious God? So  
that all the useless distinctions you give upon these  
two last Objections, do but leave us still in the  
dark, how to Answer the said Objections, by your  
Principles; for they cannot be Answer'd to com-  
mon Sense, not with all the Orthodox Jargon, be-  
yond the Seas, no nor on this side the Moon.

How do you Answer that common Objection of  
many loose People, if I be decreed to be saved, I  
cannot be Damn'd, do what I will. And if I be  
decreed to be Damn'd, I cannot be Saved, do what  
I will. You know, how Arch-Bishop King An-  
swers that, viz. That we don't know what de-  
creeing Means in God. Will you Assent to that.

Calvin. I can Answer it my own way, that  
this is False Reasoning and Extravagance, that  
proceeds from the Confusion of Ideas. I tell you  
in short, an Elect cannot live Wickedly; nor he  
that is not Elect cannot live Righteously; whate-  
ver you Enemies of God's Election do say; for  
take away Obduration in Sin, and you take away  
Reprobation,

Reprobation, and take away Conversion; and Earth, and you take away Election. If you set your thoughts in right Order.

**Ch. Span.** Why do you call upon Sinners for Repentance then? For he that finds he can and does live in Wickedness, must conclude by your Doctrine that he is none of the Elect. For you say the Elect cannot live Wickedly. And he that is not Elect, cannot live Vertuously. But the Scripture shows both these to be untrue; he that lives a Good Life now, may hereafter, if he look not to himself by persevering to the End, become a cast-away, that is a Reprobate, which St. Paul was solicitous to beware of, in himself, 1 Cor. 9. 27. — And when the Righteous turneth from his Righteousness and committeth Iniquity, there is falling from Grace to Wickedness. — *Ezech. 18. 24.* And where shall come a Falling-away first. — *Thel. 2. 23.* — See also *Heb. 10. 38.* and *29. Verle.* And *Heb. 6. 4. 5.* And *1 Cor. 10. 12.* And many more Proofs might be brought. And on the other side, he that lives a very Wicked Life now, may yet alter his Life, amend, and come to Heaven; Here therefore you are all over wrong, Take away Obduration; you say, and you take away Reprobation, no such Matter; a Man's Obduration may be taken away for a long while, and he may live a very good Life; yet such may, and often do, turn to Wickedness again, and are Lost; and so on the Contrary, many that Live very Wickedly may turn to Righteousness, and be Saved. I know not how you rectify the Confusion of Ideas, by those Rare Consequences, of those Precious Principles, of the Irresistibility of Grace, and no falling from Grace, &c. You call us still the Enemies of God's Election: This is like the Piety of those Men you Learn'd from: We are the best Friends (of the two sides) by far, to God's Election, that wou'd Vindi-



Vindicate it from your Abuses: You know we own God's Election; but not in a Dreadful Senseless Way, but a Rational, that is, a Conditional Election.

How do you Answer this other Objection, that your self told me was brought against you, that is, how are they justly Condemnable as Obstinate Refusers of his Call, that could not possibly come, without some help of his Grace, and he would let them have none.

**Calvin.** Howsoever Reasonable or Just, this Objection may appear, yet I may say safely, that there is nothing in it, but Sophistry, and Error.

**Ch-Man.** That's the same Answer which the Papists still give us, That all we say is *Sophistry*. But *Sophistry* is always that which with Scholastic Juggles opposes Common Sense, 'tis the Men that Learn't no Logick give this Objection, and the Poorest Plow-Men will hit it Naturally; how comes this to be called *Sophistry*? There is need of *Sophistry* indeed to Answer it, but let us see how all your Logick, and *Brewster's* Distinctions to help you, can do it.

**Calvin.** I hope to make you sensible it is but *Sophistry*, and Error. First then, I desire it may be observed, that if this Objection were granted, it wou'd run down three of the best Established and clearest Truths of Religion. First, That Man in the state of Corruption, is absolutely incapable of Converting himself to God, without the help of God's special Grace. Secondly, That God Adjudges to Eternal Torments, all those that will not be Converted; And Thirdly, That God is Infinitely Just, and that the least Injustice cannot be ascribed to him without Blasphemy. These two last Truths are not in Dispute. And to prove the First, I shall only bring two Passages of *St. Paul*.

**Ch-Man.**

**Ch. Man.** Hold, save your Labour: What need you go about to prove that which no Body denies, at least not of our Church. That Man in the state of Corruption, is absolutely incapable of Converting himself to God, without the help of his Grace. This we all own: But how does the Objection run down this, does it not plainly suppose, and say the same, *Why shou'd they be Condemn'd for not coming, who cannot come without Grace?* How does this run down that Truth, that Man cannot Convert himself without Grace? And to make greater Cry, you said, it wou'd run down three of the best established and greatest Truths of Religion; and yet with the next Breath, you Grant the two last are not in Dispute between us. What did you produce them for then, and charge the Objection with overthrowing them. And yet the Objection plainly affirms, or allows, all these three Truths. How have you shewn the Sophistry of the Objection then. Truly, another wou'd think this Answer is not so much as Sophistry it self, but downright Insignificance. If you'll believe those Forreign Doctors, whose Persons you so have in admiration, can be able to maintain such things, you had best write to them, to defend your Cause. And I will be their Disciple too, if with all their Jargon and Chopt Logick, they can Confute this obstinate Church of *England*, as they call Her.

**Calvin.** I cannot forbear calling this Objection of the Adversaries of God's Election, a Sophism, since it doth not only contradict *the express affirmations of Holy Writ*, but also other Truths of Religion, and Experience, which are clear and undeniable. And this is a second Observation which I desire may be made; You pretend, that a Rational Creature is not Guilty of the Evil he commits, if he be so Obdurate as to be incapable to Act otherwise; But O happy Persons, will the Worldly Libertines

Bertines say; they have found the way to do all the Evil they please without Guilt, since the Impossibility therein of doing better, will be to them instead of Innocence and Justification, for my part, I cannot give my consent to such Doctrine.

**Ch Man.** But we do not pretend so, neither first nor last. We do not pretend, but that Mankind were all Guilty in Original Sin, and deserved Damnation. And we own every actual Sin he commits after, adds to his Guilt, and will make his Punishment the greater: But here you blind the State of the Case; We do not say, that the lapsed State is a State of pure Innocency. We only say, that it is not so honourable a way among Christians, to vindicate God's Goodness, Mercy, and Sincerity, in his Promises, Offers, and Calls to us, to deny us the means of that Conversion he requires, and calls to us for; without which means, or help, he knows we cannot stir, and which he also gives to his other Creatures before our Face, which are no better qualify'd for his Mercy, than we. That is not so honourable a way, for what we conceive to be Infinite Goodness, Mercy, and Sincerity, as to grant us, but the common necessary Grace he gives to others, and then let the Fault be at our own Door, if we obey not his Call to Conversion. Let his Justice lie Undisputed, who you'll say might Damn all Mankind if he would (though some perhaps would Dispute that too) we contest only, which is the honourablest Character for his Goodness, Mercy, and Sincerity, in his Gospel Dispensations, which are set forth unto all Men in the Second Adam. We say, All that are Obstinate, and will be Obdurate against the Common or Universal Christian Grace, deserve a more particular Damnation, with a Witness, above others, by the Terms of the very Gospel of Grace it self, tho' all, in strict Justice, have deserved it before, but Christ's

I

Death

Death took off that Universal Damnation, by his Merits; and the Merit of that will not be so Universal, if all Christians be not allowed the Grace of that Merit. Now upon this supposition, to deny us the common Effect of Christ's Merit, that is, the general Grace which the Gospel tenders, it will make some Excuse for wicked Livers, that they cou'd not help their Condemnation by the Second Covenant, they were not offer'd the means of Converting. As Christ himself says, *If I had not come, they had not had Sin; but now they have no Gloak for their Sin*, John 15. 22.

**Calvin.** There is a palpable Error in the Principles of you, that are Enemies of God's adorable Decrees. You say, That God gives to all a sufficient Grace for Conversion to God, and when we ask you, what the use of that Grace is, you Answer, That it is given to put Men in a capability of Converting themselves.

It follows then, that before God gives this sufficient Grace, Man hath not that Capability, and Consequently, according to your Principles, he is in a pretty good State, for he is safe from the Darts of Divine Justice.

But who doth not see that thus, this Pretended Common Sufficient Grace, wou'd not be a Grace but rather a Punishment and Affliction than a Favour? They are in a secure state, and God wou'd by this Sufficient Grace put them in a Dangerous one; Whilest they cannot convert themselves they cannot be Condemn'd; If then you take away that Incapability, and give them a Power to convert themselves, what do you do, but Expose them to the Danger of Damnation, and draw them out of the Port, and throw them into the Danger of being cast away.

**Ch. Man.** *If I had not come*, says Christ, *they had not had Sin*. Was that a Cruelty then in Christ to come,

Come, as you Absurdly argue here? It wou'd  
 put them in Danger, rob them of their safety.  
 But we say, God does not leave any Christians this  
 excuse or pretence of Safety, but tenders Grace to all;  
 so that they are guilty of abusing his Grace, who do  
 not convert to him; and the more they Sin on, and  
 the more Obdurate they grow, the greater their guilt,  
 and the greater will be their Punishment. Now  
 what way is this Obnoxious to all the useless In-  
 ferences, and Arguments you make, to knock down  
 a Whimley of your own setting up. As if we  
 gave Innocence and Justification to those that are  
 Obdurate in Sin to an Impossibility of Reclaiming.  
 No we do not, for tho' we make them not guilty  
 of the breach of the Second Covenant, if they  
 never had the capacity to accept it, or come under  
 it; yet we conclude them guilty of the First, and  
 if they be Evil Livers, guilty of the breach of the  
 Law of Nature, by which they may be Condemn'd,  
 without any Tryal by the Christian Law; Un-  
 less they had the Covenant of the Christian Di-  
 spensation Sincerely offer'd them, with a Capacity  
 to accept it. And then if they refuse that, their  
 Guilt and Condemnation will be the greater. But  
 if they were never effectually offer'd that, what  
 Mercy had they ever shewn them? Those Multitudes  
 (even whole Nations) that by Christ's Command  
 were Baptized into the Christian Covenant; How  
 was that a Covenant of Mercy, to them, that have  
 no Power to accept of it. And what come off is  
 it to say, as you do, that the Gospel was First  
 Preached to them, and then they were Reprobated  
 Conditionally. Pray what was that Condition?  
 It cou'd not be the Gospel Condition, for that was  
 never afforded, nor offer'd them, unless in Mockery.  
 Then it must be some former Condition they  
 were Reprobated by, and so they were Reprobated  
 for a cause that was Antecedent to the Preaching



of the Gospel. But if they had obey'd the Gospel they had been Elected to Heaven, on that Condition, and so still Election must be as Conditional as Reprobation. But Notwithstanding all this, you are positive that we give Innocence and Justification to all them that are Obdurate in Sin, to an Impossibility of Reclaiming. I think never any Adversary laid unjust Accusations to Peoples Charge, if you add to it, that you still call us Enemies to God's Decrees, and Adversaries to God's Adorable Decrees: But I am sorry you do not Remember that Slanders are no Arguments, when they are not proved.

**Calvin.** Why surely, according to your way, it wou'd seem more cruel in God to give Men sufficient Grace, than to leave them without it, because they were safe by your Doctrine. And had they not better be let alone: For that Grace wou'd put them in Danger of Damnation, as many as shoud after fall to Wickedness, whereas without the Grace they could not be Damn'd, but have Innocence and Justification.

**Ch-Man.** But there you injure us. We do not plead Justice for their Salvation in their lapsed state of Corruption, but we plead for the Mercy of the Second Covenant, that God will give us that Grace Christ has Purchased to free our Captived Wills, and enable us to Convert; that as many as will then obey his Gospel may be saved, and they that will not let them take their own sad choice. We never said they were safe before that Grace was offer'd them, but in Unavoidable Misery. And to put them into a Capacity to avoid that Misery, we wou'd Expect that God's goodness shou'd give them in his Mercy, that Grace which Christ has Purchased, and merited for them, by his Death, which was as our Church declares, a *Full, Perfect, and Sufficient Sacrifice, Satisfaction, and Oblation*

*Objection for the Sins of the whole World.* According to this Scheme you give us, God had better never have made Mankind than put him in a Danger by making him, and Christ had better never come to the Jewish Nation, than that it should be more tolerable for *Sodom and Gomorrah* than for them; And if a Prince offer a Servant 10000 l. for doing a very small easy thing, but if he do it not, will cast him into Prison during Life, 'tis a Cruelty in the Prince to offer that Covenant, least the Man should be in Danger of a worse Condition than he is in, by his Refusing to do that thing. And why shon'd he refuse it then? If he will be so mad, the Prince was not cruel for that. I do not believe these things are the issue of your own Understanding, but that you have had the Unhappiness to be imposed on by Senseless Books, for want of better Authors to read, since you came to our Church. You are not too old to read better Books yet, if you please.

**Calvin.** I think my Learn'd Authors better than your Childish ones, who yet I find are so Proud, that they wou'd not suffer another to hold a Candle to them.

**Ch-Man.** I am of Opinion, Those of our Church, that have at least thrice the Learning of your Doctors, are not half so Proud as they.

**Calvin.** But to the Matter in Hand. Tell me what business is there for this common Grace you wou'd have, to excuse Man's Condemnation in his Corrupt State, is there not equity enough in that, without any Grace given him.

**Ch-Man.** Yes, by the first Covenant. But it is the Second Covenant, or the Gospel of Christ, by which, at least all Baptized Christians shall be Judged. And the Question is, Whether it can seem equitable by the Terms of this Second Covenant of Grace in Christ, that Baptized Christians should

should be Condemn'd, that never had the Grace of the Gospel (which was Purchased for them by Christ) offer'd to them, tho' Baptized in his Faith for that purpose. But then, if sufficient Grace was offer'd to them, does it not clearly follow, that they who will reject that, and only they, should be rejected of God, and they who will comply with it, be accepted of him; and then this is Conditional on both sides; how else can we Vindicate the Goodness and Mercy, and Sincerity, and Impartiality of God, to all that Christ Died for, and tenders his Gospel to; of which Number, at least none can deny those to be, that are Baptized in his Name. If he did not Dye for them, he Dyed for none. But it is true, most of them it self, do reject the benefit of his Death, and *Crucifie to themselves afresh the Son of God.* Heb. 6: 6. *They do always resist the Holy Ghost; and grieve the Holy Spirit of God.* Acts 7. 51. Ephes. 4. 30. The Grace of the Gospel was tender'd them, and given them, especially by the Sacraments; But they would not comply with it, and so were Rejected, and if they would comply with it, they would be received to Mercy, and Consequently Elected to Heaven. And is not that Election Conditional then? All the promises of Peoples Acceptance with God from one end of the Bible to the other, are still Hypothetical, that is Conditional, or upon Supposition of our willing Acceptance. *If you be willing and obedient.—If the Wicked turn from his Wickedness.—If ye obey my voice and keep my Covenants then ye shall be a Peculiar Treasure unto me.* Exod. 19, 5. *If ye keep my Commandments says Christ.*—Are not these the terms of Salvation, as the contrary is of Damnation? And is not the one side as Conditional as the other? The truth is, it looks like a strange perverse Bantering of Human Reason to deny it. But the Men that had fallen

fallen into this gulf of fatality, thought themselves bound in Honour to make the best Defence they cou'd (though it had been much more Honourable to come to the truth) and then some of them were for sharing the Matter, and thought allowing the worst side to be Conditional, they might keep the other side Absolute, and so have a hole to creep out of.

But all those shifts are in vain, Reason and Truth will hold its own still. And as I said before, the Learn'd World is grown ashamed of that cause. Tho' you in your Juvenile Confidence, think your Tutors, that Maintain'd it, to be the best Learn'd Men on the Earth.

**Calvin.** But do not you say that if a Man have no Free-Will he is not *Compos Mentis*; And so as Mad-Men cannot Justly be punished with Death for Capital Crimes against the Laws of the Magistrate, so neither can these *non compos mentis* Men, that want Free-will, be Justly Condemn'd to Death Eternal, for what they cou'd not help. Yet now you say, they may be Condemn'd for their Original Guilt, by the First Covenant, or by the Law of Nature. Is not this a Contradiction?

**Ch-Man.** No, if you understood it right. For if by *non compos mentis*, be meant, a want of Power to Rule their own Actions, they that want Free-will, are certainly in that Case. Therefore we believe that God has free'd the VVills of all Men. And that whoever are Condemn'd by the Law of Nature it self, did not want Free-will. But the Main of our Controversy is, about those within the Pale of Christianity, that God shou'd deny them all, Free-will, and after their being called to the Gospel, shou'd by his Preterition, Assign most of them to Damnation, and single out here and there One, Absolutely, for no Reason but his Arbitrary Will, as he pleased to pick up, as it were next to hand, those

those that were no whit better than the rest, and leaves as good as he takes, and let them that are left all go to Satan, if they will, for him. Nay, (whether they will or no, they must go: For he'll neither give them Free-will, nor Grace, nor any means to Escape; tho' they were Baptized in his Name, according to his Gospel. This is the thing you force us, by your Monstrous Scheme, to Oppose.

**Calvin.** But if all Men would be free from Guilt, that wanted Free-will, wou'd it not be a Cruelty to put them in Danger, by giving them Free-will?

**Ch. Man.** Just as it wou'd be a Cruelty in a Physitian to cure a Mad-Man, and give him his right Senses, to put him in Danger of being Hang'd, if he shou'd after commit Capital Crimes. I forbear quoting to you several of your written Rages upon his Head, being I think so extremely unreasonable, that they wou'd only Nauseate any Rational Christian to hear them. But your whole Mistake in this kind of Argument, seems to proceed upon this Supposition, that the assured hopes of certain Rewards on the one Side, cannot outweigh the Danger of Threatned Punishments on the other Side, even whilst it is in our own hands to chuse which of the two we will. At that rate it were better be a Stone, than a Man; because a Stone deserves no Punishment, and is capable of none, for doing Mischief, by its falling wrong sometimes where it cou'd not help it; but if it had a Free-will to do otherwise, and capable of Punishments and Rewards, according to its choice, it wou'd be a more Miserable Creature, and placed under a more Cruel Dispensation by its Creator, as you Represent the Matter.

**Calvin.** But the Unbaptized Heathens that never heard of Christ, and so had no Grace given them, and their young Infants, and their Ideots or Fools



Fools, that never came to use of Reason, are not they Damn'd, by the Preterition of God.

**Ch-Man.** How can you or I tell that. And what have we to do so, Judge them that are wisdom?

**Congd.** But I must tell you, that the Opinion of most Christians is, that even the Heathens have Free Will, whatever way God has freed it. And that they will be some way or other (not reveal'd to us how) either in this Life, or the next, Punish'd or Rewarded, according as they have made bad or good use of it. And also, it is the Opinion of very many Good and Learn'd Christians, that those of the Heathen's Unbaptized Infants, and Idiots, that are by their want of Free Will, incapable of Rewards or Punishments, shall in the other World be Annihilated, or cease to be, and so have no being in Eternity. If you can Disprove those Divines, try your talent with them.

I Contend with you only about Christians, that are Baptized in Christ's Faith, and visible Members of his Church, that God does not deny any of them Grace, and Free Will; Nor deal Arbitrarily with them, by Preterition, or by Absolute Election, without Regard to their Life. But deals with them all, *According to their Works.* And in this Cause it is, that I do not fear the utmost force of all your Logical and Metaphysical Tutors, whom you seem to think the Learnedst Men in the World.

**Cathin.** Not only those Learn'd Men I follow, but all the Primitive Fathers, those Elephants of the Church, do hold with us, the Adoreable Decrees of Absolute Election to Heaven.

**Ch-Man.** I do not wonder you that are so little Acquainted with the Fathers, shou'd think so; But none of your Party was ever able to bring any of the Fathers to their side but only one of the latest or the Youngest of the Latin Church, in the fourth Century, that is, *St. Augustin*, who First

Innovated in that Point, and receded thereby, from the Doctrine of his Elders, and from all the Greek Churches, who were for above 300 Years after Christ, the most Flourishing, and most Numerous, and most Catholick Churches. And this I pointed to you, even in Bishop *Burnet*, on the Articles of our Church, who also gives his own Suffrage against your Tutors Cause in his Preface, tho' he has done all he cou'd to palliate and excuse their Error. Methinks you need not be so rash and possive in this, till you had better Examia'd, and been better Grounded in, the Learn'd Authors of your own Church now; which you need not be ashamed of: For the Church of England Divines have carryed, before you were born, and yet do carry, the Bell from the Christian World, both for the Fame of their University Libraries, and for the Piety, Parts, and Learning, of their Writers, and Doctors. Hundreds of which, both you and I may rather admire, than think to Oppose what they Unanimously Teach us. And you ought not to give Battle thus to all our living Prelates, and Doctors in Divinity; of whom I am Confident, you cannot find one single Doctor living, that ever was Educated in any of the Three Universities of *Oxford*, *Cambridge*, or *Dublin*, that holds on your side. You ought to have a little diffidence of your own Opinion, as well as more Submission to the Bishops of your own Church, whom I submit to also. And surely she ought to Judge of, and Explain the Sense of Her own Articles. And if She has thought fit, to keep a Latitude in the Word- ing, so as not to exclude Foreigners from Her Communion; yet that which She Declares to be Her own Opinion, by all Her living Doctors, ought not to be Opposed, but rather Confirm'd by all Her true Sons.

Calvin,

**Calvin.** What you say would be something, if we had not the Current of all the Scripture against you. Our Doctrine of Divine Predestination, I told you at first was most agreeable to the Holy Scriptures.

**Ch. Man.** And I told you it was not; you have hardly produced any Scripture yet, tho' I have brought several against you.

**Calvin.** I have reserved them for this Part of our Discourse, and now you shall have enough of them. But first that we may set our thoughts in right Order, and that my Proofs may be rightly applied; I must tell you that I own Christian Vertues to be the Infalible Way to Life, and the Genuine Fruits of Faith, which is it self the Fruit of our Absolute Election to Heaven.

**Ch. Man.** If Christian Vertues be the Infalible way to Life or Salvation, why do you lay the Way thereto, solely upon another thing, the Absolute Decree, or the Unconditional Election, without any regard to Christian Vertues, or so much as any fore-sight of them? 'Tis true they are the Fruits of Faith; but you make Faith it self the Fruit or Effect of Absolute Election. I say, no, but Conditional Election to Heaven is the consequent of Faith and Works, and these are the Effects of Christ's Merits and Grace, accepted, and comply'd with, by us. Without which we can never be Elected to Heaven. And accordingly 'tis by such Christian Vertues St. Peter commands us to make sure our Election, *For if ye do these things ye shall never fall,* 2 Pet. 1. 10. So that our Election to Heaven is not sure, nor pass'd upon us at all, till we first do these things.

**Calvin.** That is not St. Peter's Meaning. Our Election cannot in the Nature of the thing be made surer in it self, than it is already. For no Power in Heaven or Earth, nor even in Hell,

shall ever be able to Detect it. *The Foundation of God standeth sure.* But the Apostle's perswading us to make our Calling and Election sure, is only to make our selves sure, not to make it sure in Heaven, but in our Hearts; not in Regard to God, but in Regard to our Neighbours, and our selves, and to make it sure in our own Minds, by Confirming more and more in our Hearts the Sense of our Election. And in so doing we shall never fall in the way of Salvation; that is, in so doing you shall procure to your selves a sure and easy Entrance into the Everlasting Kingdom.

**Ob-Oban.** In so doing, so do the Antinomians, Solidians, Quakers, and Papists, as well without Works, as with them. They assure their own Hearts, firmly enough, in their own perswasion. And we can easily with a little Self-Flattery perswade our own Hearts, that Lies are Truth, and a very little of Christian Vertues will do that, and less perhaps will deceive our Neighbours, with hopes of our Fine Condition, as to our being surely Children of the Absolute Election, if we do but as much as they themselves do; who have also the same Saving Faith, or Perswasion of their own Absolute Election. This the Impudentest People can do most of, that have but Charm of Imagination enough. And is this all the Meaning *St. Peter* has, in charging us so strictly to make our Calling and Election sure? Only to perswade our own Hearts to such a Fancy, about a thing that cannot be made surer in its own Nature, than it is already, before we do any of those Works at all? You say, in so doing you shall never fall in the way of Salvation. In so doing, how can we so do? Whereas you say elsewhere, *None among us can possibly do it: Who among us can do it, It is the Spirit of God that can and must do it.*

But here again, with the same Breath, you say, in so doing you shall procure to your selves a sure and easie En-

ance into the Everlasting Kingdom. Yet it is the design of all your Doctrine, to prove, that no Man can do any thing towards procuring himself any Entrance into the Everlasting Kingdom. That wou'd be, you tell us, giving Man the Prebeminence of God, by striking out our unequal Fortunes from an equal Grace; and so we shou'd owe God no more thanks when we are in Heaven, than the Damn'd in Hell do. These are some Samples of your Tutor's most Orthodox Contradictions: as they call themselves always the most Orthodox; and in all their Books you'll find this boast (as to their own Tenents) for themselves, *Orthodoxi dicunt*.

Does not St. Peter bid us, make our Calling and Election sure? First our Calling, and then our Election. Our Calling, as joined with our Election, can mean nothing but the Profession and true Practice of Christian Religion. This is indeed, as the Scripture styles it, a *high Calling*, a Holy Calling, a Heavenly Calling; 'tis our very Religion it self reduced to Life and Practice, not the speculative Part only, the professing by Words chiefly, but the Living to it, the Dwelling on it, the leading our Life in that Calling, as St. John says, not in Word, neither in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth: 1 John 3. 18. And as St. James says, Not a forgetful Hearer, but a doer of the Work, this Man shall be blessed in his Deed. James 1. 25. Now without making this sure in the first place by the Practice of all those Vertues St. Peter there Names; the Second thing, that is, our Election, can never be secured.

Calvin. You have no right Sense of it at all, not setting the things in right Order. First then, by our Calling and Election, St. Peter understands the two Chief Graces, which God makes use of to bring us to Salvation, our Election is the Eternal Decree of our Salvation, and our Calling is in time the Execution of that Decree. God designed from



from all Eternity, to separate us from the rest of Sinful and Impenitent Men, to save us by Jesus Christ, and to call us to his Communion through the Gospel; this is our Election. And when in time he calls us to his Blessed Communion, and brings us from the Power of Darkness, into the Kingdom of his dear Son, that's our Calling.

He begins with our Calling, nor that this be the first in order of Nature, for it rather follows our Election, as the Fruit and Effect thereof, but in regard to us, because we come first to know our Calling, and that by it we ascend up to the Knowledge of our Election, as from the Effects to the Cause, and from the Streams to the Spring.

**Ch-Man.** Here you set down the Order of these Decrees, First *Election*, then *Calling*, which (you say) must follow after Election, as the Fruit and Effect of it. But yet you told me three times before, the order wherein the Decrees of God ought to be placed, when God comes to conceive them, and that the Decree of the outward Preaching of the Gospel, ought to be conceived before that of Election. We must not conceive that God first abuses, And afterwards resolves to call them by his Gospel. But we must conceive, that he first gives them his Gospel, and that afterwards he abuses some to give them his Holy Spirit. Quite contrary to what you say here. One wou'd think if Foreign Orthodoxy be capable of Contradictions, this is certainly one.

**Calvin.** But let me Explain to you first what our Election is, before we come down to the consideration of our Calling.

But how shall we presume to speak of so great a Myſtery, so Sublime, that no Angelical Understanding is able to comprehend it, nor Human Tongue to express it, how shall we venture to lift up the Vail of that Mystical Ark, to look into the Secrets of it? This Consideration, hath made some say,

say, that 'twere much better never to speak of this Mystery. Some others moved with certain Zeal for avoiding the Scandals which from the beginning have divided the Church, upon this difficult Subject, thought it necessary never to Treat of it again, but we shou'd Consider, that the Apostles themselves were not so Scrupulous or Cautious in this, they spoke and writ on this Subject, as much as on any other, they fore-saw, without doubt, how the Prophane wou'd abuse it, by their Impious Objections, and yet they wou'd not deprive the Church of the knowledge of this Mystery; and if we fear the occasion which the Prophane may take from such Discourses as this, to trample under their feet those precious Pearls, there wou'd be but few Articles of our Belief, which may be allowed to be spoken of. We shou'd then leave in silence the Mystery of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation of our Blessed Saviour, the Creation of the World, and others, which the Prophane abuse and deride.

But this is a bottomless Abyss you'll say perhaps, which cannot be founded without danger of losing our selves in it. I Confess it is an Abyss; but to the Children of God, 'tis an Abyss of Love, and happy is he that looles himself in it, it is an Abyss of Grace, wherein our Sins are sunk for ever, and all our Thoughts sweetly confounded, and swallowed up in admiration of God's Mercy. It is true, we cannot unfold all the difficulties that offer upon this Mystery. We cannot measure the height of it; and must cry out with St. Paul, upon the brink of this Abyss of Love, *O the Depth, of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out*: But it doth not follow, that leaving the hidden things to God, we shou'd not Meditate on those which he hath revealed for our Consolation; and that tho' we cannot find out all the reasons of this

this great Mystery, we should not be bound to Retain and Believe firmly the truth of it.

I know also, that Flesh and Blood ought not to presume rashly to Judge of these Eternal Ways of God, which are past finding out, they are a Sanctuary, which the Angels cover with their Wings, and wherein we ought to be content to believe, without being permitted to behold. But we must also acknowledge that without looking farther than the Bounds of Divine Revelation, there is no thought so pleasant, nor Doctrine so wholesome, to the Faithful Soul, as that of his Election, there is no Truth the Sentiment whereof he ought to be more careful to assure to himself, since it is the Foundation of his Faith, and the Source of all his Comforts.

Ch. Man. A Delicate Speech! But what if we find the same Oratory in a Popish Fryar, pleading for Transubstantiation: Put but that Word, instead of Election, all along, and repeat it again, and see whether the whole Discourse wou'd not be as true, and as strong for that, as it is for this: For even all the Scripture, and the very Apostles, have given as many and as good Texts for that Mystery, as for this of Absolute Election to Heaven, without Regard to Works, and as capable of Defense, if not more so; and by all I can see both Scripture, Sense, Reason, and Antiquity, and this fine Speech too, wou'd as soon persuade me of the great Mystery of Transubstantiation, as of this great Mystery of Absolute Unconditional Election to Heaven. The Fryars have often used the same Cant, of the Sublime Angelicalness, and Admirable Abyss, of their profound Mystery of Transubstantiation: And of the Angels covering it with their Wings. And of that Vail of the Mystical Ark, where all Human Reason must humble and lose it self, and be Swallowed up in sweet

Admira-

Admiration. And of the Believing without Seeing too. Truly all the Difference I see, is, that this Rapturous Rhetorick does better fit (ebbie Mystery, and is more suitable to it, than to this other Abyss, or New-Coin'd Mystery of Absolute Unconditional Election to Heaven, so as e-ved Compelling People to come in.

**Calvin.** Compelling! Why, what say you to our Saviour's Parable of the King's Wedding-Feast, *Matt. 22.* Where many were called, but few chosen. And St. Luke repeats indeed the same Parable, with the Words, *Compell them to come in.*

**Ch. Man.** All Commentators tell us, those that were first called to the Wedding, were the Jews, first called to the Gospel, but they Generally Slighted it, and Kill'd his Servants that Preached to them. Then the Gentiles, all other Nations mean't by the Publick High-Ways, were Invited, had the Gospel Preached to them, they flock'd in to it. But some of them (as too many are now) were Carnal Gospellers, came to Christ's Mysteries, without due Qualification, or sincere Faith with Obedience; That's the Wedding Garment, which whoever wants, shall be cast into outer Darkness: For many indeed are call'd to the Gospel, but few obey it, so as to be Elected or Chosen to Heaven. *ελεχτοι*, is by most Interpreters, said to denote those that are, upon some Tryal, found fit to be Prefer'd before others. They are first Called, and if they be found Obedient, and acceptably so, they are made Elect. As to the compelling, it means the compulsion of Reason, and kind Persuasion, not of any irresistible Force. The conviction of Kindness, and gentle reasonable Persuasion compels many ones Free-Will, to consent freely to that which no force cou'd otherwise drive them to. If you take it in t'other Sense, 'twill be like

the Construction of the late King James's Essay, put upon it (when the said King James was in Dublin) who Preaching (as I have been told by them that heard him) in St. Katherin's Church, took those Words for his Text, *Compel them to come in.* And Handled them so, that all the timorous Protestants that heard it; who were many, as well as those they told it to, expected without more ado, to be compell'd with Fire and Sword to come in to the *Romish* Church. I do not say, you have yet insisted on those Words, *Compel them to come in*, in a Sense of Force, but I have heard many of your Side do it. And I desire you to Consider, whether your Tenent of Irresistable Grace, will not justify the same Construction of forceable Compulsion.

Calvin. Can there indeed be any thing so comfortable and sweet, as to know that we are of the number of those whom God hath chosen from all Eternity, from among the rest of Rebellious and Impenitent Sinners, to Redeem us by Jesus Christ, and to Impart us his Grace and Glory. This was the Reason that our Saviour would have his Disciples to *Rejoice*, not that the Spirits had been made subject unto them, *but that their Names were written in Heaven.*

Ch. Man. How shall we know this comfortable and sweet thing you speak of, that each of us are of that absolutely Elected Number? Christ does not reveal that to each of us (who are no Miracle Working Saints yet) as he did to the Blessed Apostles, *that their Names were written in Heaven.*

Calvin. This is what St. Paul was giving Thanks for to God, for the *Thessalonians*, and would have them also to be thankful of, we are bound, saith he, to give Thanks always for you Brethren, Beloved of the Lord, *because God hath from the beginning chosen you to Salvation, through Sanctification* of



of the Spirit, : and Belief of the Truth: 2. Ephes. 2. 13,  
-14. v. of God to elect in the world

**Ch-Man.** That of *Thessalonians*—From the be-  
ginning chosen you to Salvation, means from the be-  
ginning of Christianity; because they were of the  
First, that Believed on the Preaching of the Gospel  
at *Thessalonica*. Through which Belief, and the  
Sanctification that followed it, God Elected them.  
This even Dr. Hamond (if you read him) wou'd  
shew you to be the Sense of this Place.

**Calvin.** This is the Mystery which St. Peter  
would have the Faithful *Hebrews* to think on seri-  
ously, when he tells them of their Election, in or-  
der to bring them to the Consideration of that  
Adorable Decree of God, All-Wise, All-Free, and  
All-Merciful, whereby Fore-seeing in the Light of  
his Infinite Knowledge, all Mankind Fallen in  
Adam, and Guilty of Eternal Death, through their  
Rebellion, and Unbelief, he resolved of his good  
Will and Mercy only, to chuse a certain Number  
out of that Cursed Stock, that were neither better,  
nor more excellent than the rest, to save them by  
Jesus Christ, and make them Eternally happy in  
his Communion.

**Ch-Man.** This is the Mystery (you say) St.  
Peter wou'd have the Faithful *Hebrews* to think on  
seriously. But you do not tell us where; for he  
wrote no Epistle to the *Hebrews* particularly. And  
if you mean this Text about Election, we can find  
none of these Addle Fancies in it, that Stuff some  
Heads, about chusing a certain Number out of that  
Cursed Stock, that were no better than the rest.

**Calvin.** This is that great Mystery, which St.  
Paul calls sometimes the *Fore-knowledge of God*, as  
*Rom. 8. 29* vers. to intimate his Love towards us  
when he separated us from others. Sometimes Pre-  
destination of God, to signify the admirable Di-  
spensation of those Means, which he hath designed

himself, to bring us to his Salvation : And sometimes he calls it the Purpose of God, to represent the Immutable Firmness of his Council.

*Ob. Man.* You say, *This is that great Mystery St. Paul there speaks of.* But he speaks not a word of this your great Mystery there, but of Fore-knowledge, who he intended shou'd follow Christ in Suffering for his Truth : And then he called to Suffer in due time, that they might be Conformed to the Image of his Son; that is, in Sufferings. If we Suffer with him, we shall also be Glorify'd with him, as *1 Cor. 17, 18.* 'Tis a shame to be so Ignorant of Dr. Hammond's Expositions, and all our Commentators on this Chapter, and on that whole Epistle to the Romans.

You affirm the strange Doctrine of your Scheme, over and over again, but Prove none of it. Nor Answer any of our Explications, nor shew the Unfitness of them, any more than if you never saw them.

*Calvin.* My Business is, first, to bring my Scripture Proofs, and Reasons against you. And so I will go on. Now if you ask the Reason why God hath chosen us, and left others, the Scripture affords none other, but that because, it was his Will. Do not then Imagine that he hath seen any thing in you that might have Obliged him to bestow his Favour upon you : Neither your Works, nor your Faith, nor any good Use you could make of his Graces, nor any other good Qualification that might be capable to attract his Love. Alas, what could he have seen in you but an extream Corruption, an ungrateful Rebellion, and an obstinate Perverseness, that instead of Prompting him to Love you, made you rather the Objects of his Just Hatred. Let us then acknowledge to the Glory of God, that in that he chose us, it was a mere Effect of his Grace, and not our Merits,

the

The Fruit of his Mercy, and not of any good Disposition in us. *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you* saith our Saviour, *John 15 Chap. 16 Verse.*

Herein is Love, not that we Loved God, but that he Loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins, saith St. *John. 1 Ep. 4. 10.* This is what St. *Paul* insists so much upon in his Epistles, to prove that it is an Election of Grace, as he calls it, in the 11 Chap. to the *Romans*, 5. Vers. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that shows Mercy, saith he in the 9 Chap. *Rom. 16 Verse.* And in the 1 Chap. of his 2 Epist. to *Tim.* the 9 Ver. *God hath Loved us, and called us with an Holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the World began.*

**Ch Man.** The only Reason and Cause of our Election and Salvation, is God's Mercy and Free Grace in Christ, but the Condition on which that Mercy and Grace will accept of us, is Faith in Christ, and Obedience to him. Our Saviour chose Twelve Apostles, not they him, and he Ordain'd them, to bring forth the Fruit of Converting so many Nations to the Gospel. And what then, we own this choosing those Twelve to be Apostles, rather than others, was Absolute, for this was Election to a special Privilege, and all such sort may be Absolute, but their Election to Heaven, was Conditionally, that they did their Duty, both as Christians, and as Apostles. *Judas* himself was one of the Twelve, that was so Chosen by Christ to the Apostleship, but he was not Elected to Heaven, because he by his Transgression fell: And that was his own Fault. 'Tis strange, how improperly you bring these Scriptures that make nothing for you, as you do again, 1 *John 4. 10.* — *Not that we Loved him, but he Loved us, and sent his Son,* — All this is true. For we could not

not Love him before we were Born, but he had that Love, Mercy, and Care, for his Creatures, before they were Born, to send them a Saviour: But now he expects we shou'd Love and Obey him, or else we may go to Hell if we will; for he'll never take us into his Bosom otherwise. The Gracious Election of Gentiles, as well as Jews, to the Gospel, shews that God did not Chuse either of them to the Priviledges of the Gospel, for any Judaical, or other, Works that either Side had done, but meerly for his own Mercy sake, and that Grace he designed for us in Christ, *before the World began.* 2 Tim. 1. 9. That is, to give us the Gospel Grace; but yet this does not imply, that he Elects any particulars of us to Heaven, unless we Obey that Gospel Grace, by Believing and Obeying Christ.

Then you Quote Rom. 9. 16. *Not of him that willeth or runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy.* That is, not of him that willeth or runneth, to have the Gospel Dispensation Moulded to his own Fancy, or Confined to Jews only: but of God that sheweth Mercy to Gentiles, as well as Jews.

But thus you Abuse and Chop to Pieces, that poor Epistle to the *Romans* continually, without regarding the Analogy and Scope of the whole, but Catching at every dubious Word that may seem to favour your Cause.

**Calvin.** If God's Election was Grounded upon the fore-sight of their Faith and good Works, he should Chuse Men because they have Believed; but the Spirit of God tells us every where, that he Chuses them that they may Believe. And Faith is the Fruit and Effect of God's Election, and not the Cause of it: For God hath Chosen us, saith St. Paul, in the 1 Chap. to the Eph. 4 Verse, not because we were Holy, *but that we should be Holy.* And if there be any that Believe, it is because they were *Ordain'd to Eternal Life.* Acts 13. 48. And if it were

were otherwise, we should say, that we discern our Selves, and that we Chuse God before he Chuses us, against what the Scriptures constantly affirm.

If we consider our Election absolutely in it self, it can have no other Cause but the Grace of God only. And if we consider it with Relation both to those whom it takes, and those whom it leaves, it is also certainly true, that nothing but the Freedom of his Good Pleasure can be the Cause of it: For since all Men are equally Rebellious and Impenitent, equally deserving Eternal Death, why should he chuse some sooner than others? Look as long as you will for the Reason and Motive of this Wonderful Discerning, you shall find none but in the good pleasure of God only, because it thus pleased him to discern and chuse. Some will say, perhaps, that God hath chosen some because they were in extream Misery and Objects of Pity. But if this had been the cause of his choice, he would have chosen them all: Because they were all equally Miserable and worthy of Pity. If they say that others have been Reprobated, because they were Vicious and Wicked, and would not be Reclaimed, by any Means: And that they deserved to be forsaken; at this rate God would have forsaken and Reprobated them all; because they were all equally Guilty and Impenitent. Let Reason then humble her self here, and let her Adore in silence the Dispensation of God, and let her Confess that when he Imparts his Grace to some in bringing them out of their Misery, he doth no wrong to others in leaving them in it: Because being all Wicked and Impenitent, they have but what they Justly deserve. Thus the Elect have great Reason to thank God for his Grace, whereof they were Absolutely Unworthy: And the rest have no Reason to Complain of his Justice, because



cause he returns them but their due, by Reason of their Crimes.

**Ch: Man.** Wherever you find the Word Chastising or Election, in the Bible, it must presently mean your wild way, of Absolute Unconditional Election to Heaven, without any more add; contrary to all the plain Scriptures, and to the General Design of the Holy VVritings, as if there could not be any Election to Sufferings, or to special Priviledges, or to the Gospel; or any sort of Election, but that one unreasonable sort of Unconditional Election to Heaven. So *Eph. 1. 4. He hath chosen us* (that is, only to be Christians) *that we shou'd be Holy.* *Acts, 13. 48. As many as were ordain'd to Eternal Life believed.* The true English of the Original by the word *ταυτων*, is as many as were *disposed to Eternal Life believed.* For many that were not so disposed then, at that single Sermon, were yet disposed at another time, and Believed. The 44. Verse says, almost the whole City of *Antioch* were at that Sermon; and many of them undoubtedly Believed after, for all that were Saved of them did not Believe on that one Day, but were Converted by degrees, and by often hearing. Here you want Dr. *Hammond* on the Testament again, or other Guides of your own present Church.

These are all your Scriptures in this Speech, and what else you give us in it, is to no purpose; except one Material Passage, which is another of your most Palpable Contradictions, in plain Terms Contradicting your other Doctrine of Conditional Reprobation, for this proves plainly both Sides to be Absolute in this discerning, as you call the difference God makes between them. You tell us others have not been Reprobated because they were *Vicious, and Wicked* -- For at this rate God wou'd have Forsaken and Reprobated all, because all were equally

Guilty

*Guilty and Impenitent.* It seems now the right Face of your Doctrine is shewn, that it was God's Absolute Will Reprobated them, as well as Saved the other. If they were not Reprobated because they were Wicked and Impenitent; what cause was it for then? What is become of the Conditional Reprobation? Where's the Condition?

Here in your more Lucid Interval, you cou'd not but see, that if they were Reprobated, only because they were Impenitent; it wou'd unavoidably follow, by the Rule of Contraries, that the other were Elected, for the contrary Reason, because they were Penitent. But this wou'd spoil all your Doctrine; and therefore Conditional Reprobation is here Contradicted by you at this time; and affirm'd at another time. Your next Words are, *Let Reason then bumble her self here.* Truly, I think she shou'd be humble in the midst of such Contradictions.

*Calvin.* Nay, but this is what the Holy Scriptures have revealed to us, of the Mystery of our Election, which St. Peter will have us to give Diligence to make sure; The Calling which he joins to it, signifies, as we have already observed, the Execution of that Decree in time, for as God hath purposed from all Eternity, to Chuse us, and separate us from the rest of Men, to bring us to Salvation by Jesus Christ, likewise, by his Calling, he separates us Effectually, when he takes us out of the Wicked and Impenitent World, to bring us into his Holy Communion, through the Voice of the Gospel, and the Power of his Spirit. It is by this Calling, that he works Faith in our Hearts, and Converts us to himself; that he brings us out of the Power of Darkness, into the Kingdom of his Son, that he Translates us from the state of Sin, into that of Grace, from Error to Truth, and from Death to Life.

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But that we may not mistake the meaning of this Mystery, we must Observe, that the Scripture makes mention of two sorts of Calling, the one is made Outwardly, only by the Word of the Gospel; and the other is made Inwardly, both by the Word, and by the Spirit of God. Through the First of these two Callings, we are Called into the Outward and Visible Communion of the Church, and through the Second, we come into the Inward and Mystical Communion of *Jesus Christ*.

The Outward Calling, remains without Effect, as to the Profane and Hypocrites, who are indeed in the Outward Communion of the Church, but have no part in the Salvation of the Gospel, because they make light of it, it is of this Outward Calling, that our Saviour saith in the 10 Chap. of *St. Matt.* 16 Vers. that *many are Called, but few are Chosen*.

But the Inward Calling, (which is that which *St. Peter* means in my Text, because he speaks of a Calling, by which an Entrance shall be Ministered unto us, into the Everlasting Kingdom of our God) is always Effectual, because it is the Fruit of our Election, and it is of this Calling, that *St. Paul* saith in the 8 Chap. *Rom.* 28 Vers. that we know, that *all things work together for good to them that Love God, that is, to them that are Call'd, according to his Purpose.* And in the 30 Vers. That *whom he did Predestinate, them he also Call'd, and whom he Call'd, them he also Justified, and whom he Justify'd, them he also Glorified:* And in the 11 Chap. 29 Ver. That *the Gifts and Calling of God, are without Repentance.*

**Ch-Man.** You say, this is what the Holy Scriptures have Reveal'd to us, of the Mystery of our Election, whereas they have not Reveal'd one Word of your way to us. God purposed, we grant from all Eternity, to separate them that will be

be Righteous, from them that will continue to be Wicked. And to Call the Wicked World out of Darkniess to Light. And to give the Gospel Call even to the Heathens, or Gentiles. But he never offers his Gospel in Mockery, without the Grace that shou'd go along with it. Therefore your Trifling Distinction, is Insignificant of the Outward Call, and the Inward Call. If I Call you a Mile off, where I know 'tis impossible you shou'd hear me, do not I Mock you, to say, I have Called you, and you wou'd not Answer, and therefore you shall be Condemn'd. Here you bring down the same Epistle to the *Romans* again, to no purpose, as you wou'd plainly find, if you had read but St. *Chrysostom's* Homilies on it. And still you come so often over with that one place, *whom he did Predestinate, them he also Called*. Which means only to Sufferings; not to Heaven, as you still Apply it. And how can you understand this Epistle to the *Romans*, and all the Intricate Disputes of St. *Paul* with the Jews, in behalf of the Gentiles, and their Calling to the Gospel, of which Gentiles, St. *Paul* was the peculiar separated Apostle. How can you understand them, I say, without reading the Ancient Commentators, or at least, your own Church Doctors; of the Church of *England* I mean, that follow the Ancient Expositors.

**Calvin.** Let me now make another Reflection, on the properties of this Word, Calling.

The Holy Ghost makes use of it, to signify the Marvellous Effect of God's Grace towards the Salvation of his Chosen, and there are several weighty Reasons for the Choice of this Expression. First, To shew the Wofulness of our former Condition, how Sin having Alienated us from God, we could never return to him, if himself did not vouchsafe to Call us from our Wandrings, and did not make us hear his Voice, as he did formerly to

*Adam*, crying to him, *Adam*, where art thou; when he was hiding himself among the Trees of *Eden*. Second, To let us see the Dignity and Glory, to which he vouchsafes to Raise us: For this Word Calling, is used in all Languages, for a Calling to Offices and Dignities, as it is said, that God Calls his Prophets and Priests, when he Invests them with, and Instals them, in their Offices; and *St. Paul* saith often, that he was Called to be an Apostle, to Intimate the Office to which God had Raised him. Since then, the Faithful are Raised to the Glorious Dignity of God's Children, to be a Peculiar People, a Holy Nation, a Royal Priesthood, the Honour which God shews them, cannot be better Express'd, than by saying, that God Calls them. But especially the Holy Ghost, was pleased to make use of this Expression, to let us understand the means which he Employs towards the great Work of our Salvation, that is, the Word, but a Powerful and Efficacious Word, which is never without it's Effect, because it Works within, what it Commands without: And this by Allusion to the Creation, and the Raising of the Dead, wherein God makes use only of his Word, but a mighty Word, which Calls those things which be not, as though they were; and which by Calling them, makes them to be. For as God Created the Universe by his Word only, he said only, Let there be Light, and there was Light. Likewise when he Calls us, he brings us out of the Nothing of Sin, through the Word of the Gospel, and makes us the new Creatures of his Grace. This is what *St. Paul* Alludesto, when he saith to the *Corinthians*, 2 Epist. 4 Chap. 6 Vers. That God who Commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the knowledge of the Glory of God, in the face of *Jesus Christ*. And as it is by this same Word, that he Raiseth the Dead, as our Saviour saith



saith in the; Chap. of St. *John*, 2 Verse The Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall Live, so he needs but cry out, *Lazarus* come forth, to make him come out of his Grave. Likewise when he Converts us, he needs no more, but to make this mighty Voice sound in our Ears, Awake thou that sleepest, and Arise from the Dead, and Christ shall give thee Light. *Eph*: 5. 14. To make us come out of the Grave of Sin, and to Raise us to Newness of Life.

Hence we may understand the manner of this Calling: for though it may be better felt than express'd by us, yet we may say that two things are commonly found therein, an Invincible Power, and a Delectable Sweetness. First, An Almighty Virtue; Which the Sinner could never withstand, and a Gentle Force to which it is easily yielded. This is what St. *Augustin* calls a Victorious Pleasure, because this Calling of God, Triumphs over all our Lusts, and brings us to the Obedience of Christ, powerfully indeed, but Kindly, Invincibly, but still without constraint. So that one could hardly say, whether the Grace of God, in his Calling, be more Gentle than Strong, or more Strong than Gentle. And it is upon this Account that the Spirit of God expresses this Wonderful Operation of his Grace, sometimes by Creation, Regeneration, and Resurrection, to intimate the Irresistible and Powerful Strength which God uses then. And to which the Will of Man could neither Contribute any thing, nor Resist it, whatever he may do to hinder its Effect. And sometimes it is express'd by these words, Illumination, Persuasion, and Drawing, to shew thereby, that there is neither Violence nor Constraint used in this Operation of God's Grace, and that if she doth Infallibly Convert the Sinners, she doth it in a Gentle Manner, and with a Voluntary Necessity. She draws us indeed, but with Cords

Cords of Love, she puts us indeed under the Yoke of Christ, but under an easy Yoke, and a light Burden, she brings us into Subjection, but with a Delightful Bondage, that Infallibly makes us Free. In one Word, the Grace of God calls us, but in order that we should Answer, and remember never to sever her wholesome working from our Duty, nor the Inspirations of the Holy Spirit from the Endeavours of our Will. So that when the Lord bids us in his Word, saying, *Seek ye my Face*, we may Answer with our Faith, *Thy Face Lord will I seek*; and that when he tells us, *I have called thee by thy Name, thou art mine*; we may be ready to Answer him, yes Lord, we are, *we are thy People*, and thou art our Lord. *Psal. 27. 8. 9. Isa. 43. 1 Hos. 4. 19.*

**Ch-Man.** All this Frivolous Cant signifies nothing, but to Establish another, of your Foreign Tutors Maxims, another Link of the same Chain: That is, the *Irresistibility of God's Grace*; That when he calls us thereby, it must always be in the same Omnipotent Irresistible Manner, as he called the World out of nothing by the word of his Power, and just as he will call us out of the Grave at the last Resurrection Day. No doubt he made Stocks and Stones out of nothing, by the Word of his Call, and carry'd them where he pleased; and must he therefore carry us like Stocks and Stones into Heaven, by the Word of his Call: For there's no Resisting it, as this Doctrine alledges. Contrary to the most Expres Words of Scripture, *Acts 7. 51. Ye do always Resist the Holy Ghost.* And *Ephe. 4. 30. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.* It is from the Spirit of God that we have all Grace, and if that Spirit may be Grieved and Resisted, then Grace and the Call of it, is not Irresistible. *How oft wou'd I have gather'd you under my Wings, but ye wou'd not,* says Christ. *Math. 23. 37.*

It was the Resistance of their own Wills hinder'd: *It would not.* God appeals to Justice and Equity, whether the whole Fault of Miscarriage, in the way of Salvation, do not lie altogether in their own willful Resistance of God's Methods to Reclaim them, *Isai. 5. 3. 4. Judge I pray you between me and my Vineyard, what cou'd be done more to my Vineyard that I have not done, &c.*

His calling us (as you Phrase it) out of the nothing of Sin, puts me in mind of a Book of one of your Learn'd Tutors, which you shew'd me to confute me, who said, that *Sin was nothing*, and therefore that God cou'd not be the Author of Sin. For he cou'd not be the Author of nothing. But I ask then who was the Author of Sin? For neither the Devil, nor Wicked Men cou'd be the Author of nothing. And it is very hard too, that Men shou'd be Damn'd for nothing.

You say, *This Powerful Call is Invincible, but Bill without Constraint.* This is another of your Contradictions. And you say again, *the Irresistible and Powerful Strength, which God uses then, is such, to which the Will of Man cou'd neither contribute anything, nor Resist it, whatever he may do to hinder its Effect.* And yet we must believe, this is still without Constraint. So that says your next Words, one cou'd hardly say, *whether the Grace of God, in his Calling, be more Gentle than Strong, or more Strong than Gentle.* And indeed I think one can hardly say, whether this whole Scheme be more false than absur'd, or more absur'd than false. And is not a Man's Voluntary Necessity, another Contradiction, in two Words? And *Delightful Bondage*, another; God's Service is perfect Freedom: But it is the Devil's, or Sin's Service, the Scripture calls Bondage. And is it not a Contradiction unto what you said a little before, of that Call, to which the Will of Man cou'd contribute nothing, neither in Compliance, nor Resistance,

*sistance*, that now you say of the Call of Grace, *we must never sever it from the Endeavours of our own Will.* What? have we Free-will again, or is our Will forced to Endeavour! If it be forced, tho' Gently it self, then you need not Exhort it.

**Calvin.** Pray let me go on without Interruption a while, and you shall see if I do not make it out. For it is upon this Account St. *Peter* Exhorts the Faithful to make their Calling and Election sure; for the Grace of God ought not to slack the Study of Piety and Sanctification, but rather Encourage us therein, the more, that we may acquire the sense of it, and assure our selves of the Possession of it. But will some say, how can the Election and Calling of God be made sure? Are not they sure and constant already of themselves? Shall we say, that they can be altered, and that those that have been Chosen and Called, can still Fall from the state of Grace? This is indeed what the Enemies of God's Absolute Decrees of Election would vain persuade us, and they make us even of this Text to confirm their Errors, as though St. *Peter* was of their mind. But God forbid, that we should ever entertain that Opinion, so Injurious to the Glory of God's Grace, and so Prejudicial to our Salvation, we have not Learn'd Christ so, and his Apostles have too often Proved the Firmness of God's Election and Calling, than for us to doubt of it now; as though those that God hath chosen from all Eternity, and Called to himself, with an Inward and Effectual Calling, might still lose his Love. No, God's Election and Calling, are Firmer than the Pillars of Heaven, and the Foundation of the Earth, for the one is without Repentance, and the other is Grounded upon the Purpose of God that stands sure. If it were otherwise, why should St. *Paul* say to the *Romans*, the 8 Chap. *That whom he did Predestinate, them he also Called, and whom he*  
*Called,*

Called, them be also Justified, and whom be Justified, them be also Glorified. And in the 11 Chap. to the Rom. --- That the Gifts and Calling of God, are without Repentance. And in the 2 Epistle to Tim. 2 Chap. --- That the Foundation of God standeth sure, and that the Lord knows them that are his. Why should our Saviour assure us in the 10 Chap. of St. John 28 Verse, that he gives Eternal Life to his Sheep, and that they shall never Perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his Hand, because his Father who gave them to him, is greater than all. And the 6 Chap. of the same Gospel, 37 Vers. That all those that the Father hath given him, shall come unto him, and that he will in no wise cast out him that comes unto him. And why should St. Peter say in the foregoing Verses, That God gives to the Faithful, all things that pertain unto Life and Godliness, that he gives them exceeding great and precious Promises, that by them they might be partakers of the Divine Nature. How could those Holy Men of God have spoken in this manner, if they had Believed with the Old, and Modern Pelagians, that the Election of God is always uncertain, depending of our Free-Will, and subject to be Repeal'd and made Void.

Though the Holy Scriptures should mention nothing of the Immutability of God's Election and Calling: yet the Nature of those things would shew it sufficiently. For if God be Immutable in his Nature, he is no less so in his Purposes, and in his Word, God is not a Man, that he should Lye, neither the Son of Man, that he should Repent, saith Balaam in the 23 Chap. of Numbers, Hath he said, and shall he not do it, or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good. My Council shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, saith the Lord in the 46 Chap. of Isaiah, the 10 Verse.

What doth then St. Peter mean, when he bids us to make sure, what is already so sure, that no  
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Power in Heaven or Earth, not even in Hell, shall ever be able to Defeat it. To Answer this Objection, we must observe, that God's Calling and Election may be Consider'd two ways, Viz. — Either as they are in the Council of God, and in themselves; or as they are in us, and in our Sense of them. As they are in themselves and in the Council of God, it is most certain, that they are sure and need not to be made surer, because they are Grounded upon God's own Immutability, and the Fidelity of his Promises, whereupon St. Paul saith, that the Foundation of God stands sure: but as God's Election and Calling are in us, and in our Sense of them, it is undeniable, that they want to be made sure; not in Heaven; but in our Hearts; not in regard to God; but in regard to our Neighbours, and our Selves, and in this regard, St. Peter saith, that we ought to give Diligence to make our Calling and Election sure: For though God's Election and Calling be always sure in themselves, yet they are but too often dubious and uncertain in us, by reason of our Incredulity and Diffidence. For how often doth it happen to the Faithful, to doubt whether they be of the Number of those whom God hath Chosen. Do you think, that David in the Guilt of his Sin, was not disturb'd with that uncertainty of his Election, when he Cries out in the 77 Psalm, *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable more?* Do you Believe, that St. Paul was not Assaulted with this Temptation, when he Complains in the 7 Chap. to the Romans, that he was brought into Captivity, to the Law of Sin, and that he was Sold under Sin. And that St. Peter who Exhorts us now to make our Calling and Election sure, has not himself Experienced, how necessary it is for us to be Confirm'd, more and more, in the Sense of that State of Grace, when with so much weakness

he Denied his Lord three several times, after he had Promised with so much Assurance to be Faithful. Thus when the Children of God are Exposed to some grievous Temptation, or Fall into some Spiritual Desertions, they cannot indeed enjoy that certainty of their Election, but are rather Assaulted with contrary Thoughts, and though they were never brought to that Temptation of Diffidence, who knows not, that our Faith being yet but Imperfect, the Assurance which she creates in us, cannot be without some Disturbance sometimes, and that it wants daily to be Confirm'd.

Th. Dan. You seem to me to have only got some Tinkling Orations Be heart, without Considering the weight of the Reasons, or whether they be Pertinent or no. What need is there to Study Piety and Sanctification, as you Press us to, if that Work be done for us, Irresistably, whether we will or no? or (as you Phrased it before), *in which the Will of Man could neither Contribute any thing, nor Resist it, whatever he do to hinder it.*

But now you come with the usual Cant, to Establish a Third Maxim of your Foreign Tutors, another Link of the same Chain, that is, the No Possibility of Falling from Grace, and thus you say, the Enemies of God's Absolute Decrees of Election do deny, and Teach they may Fall. But you have *not so Learn'd Christ*, you say, and you Pray, God forbid you should: But I am sorry you have Learn'd him so wrong then, and are so Mised, as to think that false Scheme of Grace and Election, to be, as you say, *firmer than the Pillars of Heaven*, &c. And here again you have Recourse to the Old Text so often Abused, *whom he Predestinated, them he also Called*, &c. And let us Answer you, till our Hearts Ake, that it was to Sufferings they were Predestinated, and Call'd as the same Chapter shews: And as the same Apostle expresses it,

1 Thess. 3. 3. *That no Man shou'd be moved by these Afflictions, for your selves know, that we are appointed thereunto, which is the same thing with Predestination thereunto, yet you'll take no Notice of our Answers, but Eternally Cant the same thing over and over again. And Five Scripture Texts more you back it with. Nothing to the Purpose; so far from Proving your Assertions, that no Body cou'd think they Sounded to any thing like that way, if they had not first fasten'd their Mind to the Notion, and then Strain every thing to Clink with it. They are so far from the Matter, that I fear it would Nauseate some to hear them Repeated and Answer'd, they are so extremely Foreign to the Cause.*

But because I will leave none of your Scriptures unanswered, you shall have them however. As *Rom. 11. The Gifts and Calling of God are are without Repentance.* And what then, when he has finally and positively Determined any Matter, it is so; but when he has only Conditionally made any Rule, it will go according to the Condition. How else will you Answer these Texts, *Exod. 32. 14. Jerom. 18. 8. 10.* and many other places? Did not God Repent that he made *Achaz* King: *1 Sam. 15. 11. 35.* And Repented of the Evil against *Nineveh*: *Jonah. 3. 10.* And did not God punish Man, when he fell from the Terms and Grace of the first Covenant in *Adam*, which God call'd him to? And may he not punish him again for falling from the more merciful Terms and Grace of the second Covenant, in the second *Adam*, after he has call'd us to it? Notwithstanding this of *2 Tim. 2. 18. 19.* That the Foundation of God standeth sure, *that the Lord knoweth them that are his,* so as to raise them to Glory at the Resurrection against their Assertion, who (as the Verse before

tells us) said, that the Resurrection was past already, And what of all this?

And does Christ say, *John 10. 28.* That he gives Eternal Life to his Sheep, &c. And what then? Does it therefore follow that we, whil'st in this Mortal Life, cannot Disobey God, and turn Goats, or Wicked, because whil'st we do Obey him, none can pluck us out of his hand.

And the like in *John 6. 37.* — All that the Father giveth him, will come, and him that cometh he will in no wise cast out. And what then? The Father giveth all things, and 'tis his Grace is the first Mover of all, and if they come to, and Obey the Gospel, Christ will not cast them out. And lastly you quote *1 Pet. 1. 3.* — That in short, God giveth the Faithful all good things. And what then? Good-Lack! What sort of Proofs are these, that there can be no falling from Grace? Yet you ask, how cou'd these Holy Men have spoken in this manner, if they had believed with the Old, and Modern Pelagians, that the Election of God is always uncertain, and Subject to be Repeal'd, or made void. God's Conditional Election, which is all one with God's Covenant, we say can never be uncertain, nor never be made void, on his Side; but we may break our part of it effectually, and finally; and so make the Benefit of God's intended Mercy void to us. And so all that you have here said, is void of Truth and of Common Reason.

But that Grace is indelectible, or no falling from Grace, the whole Scripture Contradicts. *Ezech. 18. 24.* When the Righteous turneth away from his Righteousness, and committeth Iniquity. — Here's falling from Grace to Wickedness. *2 Thess. 2. 3.* There shall come a falling away first. And *Heb. 10. 38.* The Just shall live by Faith; but if he draw back, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him. And in the 29 Vers. He that Apostatized, was before

before Sanctify'd — The Blood of the Covenant subert<sup>ed</sup> with he was Sanctify'd. And Heb. 6. 4. 5. 'Tis declared possible for those, Who were once Enlighten'd and made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, to fall away so, as never to be Renew'd again. And all are Commanded to persevere, to stand fast, to continue steadfast unto Death. Which evidently shews, that we are never past Danger, till we are past this Wicked World. And therefore Grace may be fallen from, Which you call us *Religions* for holding, and for believing Free-will. All the rest of your following Unsignificance there, I shall pass by, as not to be heeded, till you come to St. Paul, whom you bring owning himself to be under Captivity to the Law of Sin, and sold under Sin. Rom. 7. Whereas St. Paul did not Affirm that of himself, but was Personating only the Natural Unregenerate Man. If you Read Dr. Hammond on the place, he will shew you it was impossible he cou'd mean himself. O And 'tis wholly Impertinent to our Argument if he did.

What if our Faith wants daily to be Confirm'd? This Persuasion of Absolute Unconditional Election to Heaven without Regard to, or fore-sight of, our Works, is not *False*. But such a thing, as if I had it in my self, I shou'd take it to be a very Groundless Assurance, and Impudent Presumption.

Calvin. Oh! you are mistaken, this Assurance is most necessary for our own Comfort, and to make us know, that our Faith is true. Nay, 'tis Faith it self. But yet I say, if this be so necessary for our Comfort, who is there among us that can do it: and procure so himself that certainty of God's Love? None is among us I Confess able to do it, it is the Spirit of God that can, and must do it, for it is his peculiar Property to Apply to us the Promises of Grace, and to Impress in our Hearts



Hearts the certainty of them. And therefore he is Called the Earnest, the Seal, the Witness, and St. Paul saith expressly in the 1 Chap. of the 1 Ep. to the Cor. 2, 22. that he which Establishes us is God, who hath also Seal'd us, and given us the Earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts. And the Spirit of God hath been given to us, saith he in the 2 Chap. of the 1 Epist. of the Cor. 12 Vers. *That we might know the things which are freely given to us of God.*

This is the great Priviledge which God hath given to his Children, under the *Economie* of Grace, not only to obtain Eternal Life, but also to enjoy the Sense and Knowledge of it. Wherefore as God hath made in Heaven the Decree of our Election, so he writes the Copy and Counter-part of it in our Hearts, by his Spirit, when he Assures us, that we are his Children, and that he is our Father, as he hath resolved to forgive us our Sins, so he enters the Sentence of it in our Souls, when he brings us through the Gospel that good News, that our Sins are Blotted out, and that there is no Condemnation against us, that are in *Christ Jesus*. As he Calls us by his Word, so he comes also to open our Hearts with his Spirit, that our Faith may hear his Voice, and Answer him immediately with *Samuel*, *Speak Lord for thy Servant heareth*, and with the Spouse in the Canticles, *Draw me and I will run after thee*. Hence we Conclude, that it is properly the Work of the Holy Spirit, to Confirm in our Hearts the Sense of our Election and Calling.

However, this does not Excuse us from using all our Industry and Labour towards it, because the Holy Spirit doth not Work in us without our Selves. For when he pleases to Exert his Grace towards the Promoting or Perfecting the Work of our Salvation, he will have us to Co-operate with him, and Second his good Inspirations, with our Zeal  
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and Obedience: But how can we acquit our Selves of this so Important Duty, you will say perhaps, it is no difficult matter to Apprehend it, since it is only by the Practice of Holiness that it can be done. This is what some Greek Copies plainly Express, wherein we only read, give Diligence to make your Calling and Election sure, but with this Addition, by, or through, good Works, to express the manner how they ought to be made sure, and though it be not thus Express'd in our Bibles; yet it cannot be Express'd otherwise, both becaule St. Peter saith in the foregoing Verses, that we ought to give all Dilligence, to add to your Faith, Vertue; and to Vertue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and becaule it is most certain, that Man can Contribute nothing towards the making his Calling and Election sure, but by the Practice of Piety, not that our Works be able to justify us before the Throne of God's Justice, where we say with St. Paul, that they are Inconsistent with the Grace of God, and could never Contribute any thing towards the making our Calling and Election sure in themselves, since whatever Virtue and Firmness there is in them, comes only from God's Election and Calling: Which are the Principle and Source of our good Works. But our good Works serve to make sure to us, the Sense of our Election and Calling, and to make others see the truth of what we really are: To this End St. Peter will have us give Diligence to make our Calling and Election sure.

First, In regard to others; for it is only by our Good Works that we can Edifie them, and make them understand that we justly pretend to the Glorious Priviledge of God's Elect, by these Means, seeing the light of our Good Works they Learn to Glorifie our common Father which is in Heaven:

ven: For as nothing can prejudice Religion so much as the Bad Life of those that profess it, whereby the Holy Name of God is Blasphemed, and the wholsom Truths of the Gospel derided; so nothing can confirm and justify, so highly, the Divinity of the Gospel, as the good Life of those that have Embraced it. Hereby they justify that God is true, and shewing in their Conversation the Feature of God's Image, they shew plainly thereby themselves to be the true Children of God, and that they have right to call upon him as on their Father. Secondly, Our Works serve to make our Calling and Election sure, in regard to our selves, because they manifest the Truth of those Graces, and confirm the certainty of them against the Doubts and Diffidence of the Flesh. Accordingly St. *John* tells us in the 3 Chap. of his 1 Ep. the 19 Verle, That hereby we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our Hearts before him. To intimate thereby that the Love we bear to our Brethren Confirms us in the sense we have of the Love of God towards us, and thus St. *James* saith, that we are Justified by Works, not to say that our good Works are the Cause and Ground of our Justification, which St. *Paul* denies stiffly all over his Epistles; but that our good Works give us a Sense and Certainty of our Justification, as being the necessary Effect of it.

But to see more plainly how our good Works serve to make our Calling and Election sure; we must observe that they Concur towards it four several ways, according to the four Regards under which they may be consider'd. First, as Seals, Secondly, as Images, Thirdly, as Fruits, and Fourthly, as Means. For First, If the Seal, of Princes, confirm and make sure their Decrees, Secondly, If Images, or Copies represent their Original. Thirdly, If Trees are known by their Fruits. And Fourthly, If Means ought

ought never to be severed from their End : then it is most certain that since our good Works are the Seal of our Election, the Images and Representations of our Calling, the Fruits of Grace, and the Means of Salvation, it is most certain, I say, that wherein they meet, God's Election and Calling must infallibly be there also.

**Ch Man.** This is wonderous strange, beyond Human Understanding ! Wou'd not any one be apt to think by this, and the rest, that (as I told you before) you have only Conn'd some Foreign Orations, full of smooth words, but void of solid sense, without considering the weight of the Reasons, or whether they be Pertinent, or no ; Nay, or whether the several Parts of your Discourse be coherent with each other, or agreeable to themselves. Here you tell us, after all your Exhortations, to make our Election sure in our own minds ; for you have told us, that in the Nature of the thing, we cannot make it surer than it is already : And that St. Peter, in this Text, means only the assuring our own minds, and our Neighbours. And 'tis clear we have more Power over our own Minds, than over our Neighbours. Yet here, I say, you tell us plainly, at last, that we cannot possibly do this it self ; 'tis God only must do it, or it will never be done. And so the whole Text is blown away ; even that slender sense of it, which you stuck to all this while, is now quite gone. For it we cannot do this it self, with all our Diligence, 'tis Nonsense to Exhort us to Diligence : And so St. Peter is much beholden to you.

Yet you speak backward and forward still : For again you say thus ; *However this does not excuse us, (but another will think it does) from using all our Industry and Labour towards it ; because the Holy Spirit doth not work in us without our selves.* What, does not the Powerful Word of God, that Calls us Irresistably,

bly, just as it did the World out of Nothing, and the Dead out of the Graves (which you affirm'd before) does it not do this without our help, without our selves Working? No, now you say, *God will have us to Co-operate with him.* But surely you have forgot, that this is making Man a sharer with God in the Work of our Salvation, or rather (as you have Express'd it) *a giving Man the Prebeminence of God, by Working out their own unequal Fortunes,* and so they owe God no thanks; for it is their Co-operation it seems must do the Work at last. And it seems their Will is now Free to Co-operate: This, Alas, (as you call it another time) is Pelagianism, Arminianism, and what not.

But you ask, *How can we acquit our selves of this so Important Duty,* and you Answer, *By the Practice of Holiness,—by, or, through good Works.* But a little after, you say, *We say with St. Paul, that good Works are Inconsistent with the Grace of God.* Is not this contrary to t'other? But yet, where St. Paul says this, we can never find. He says it of the Mosaical Works of the Jewish Law indeed, but of good Works of the Christian Law, or Christian Works of Righteousness, through Faith in Christ, he never said it. But thus you Blow Hot, and Cold, with the same Breath.

And now all the latter part of your Speech, is to bring off the odious Consequences of the first part, by securing the best Retreat you can for it. Here then you say, by all means, our good Works are necessary. First, *As Seals.* Secondly, *As Images.* Thirdly, *As Fruits.* And Fourthly, *As Means.* But by your whole Scheme, *all this Necessary* lies only on God's Part, not on ours; 'tis plainly, he alone must do all of them. First, *As Seals of Princes* (you say) *do make Sure and Confirm their Decrees.* Now every one knows, that we cannot put the Princes Seal to a Patent for our selves, 'tis himself only has his Seal.



and the whole Ordering of that: Secondly, *As Images*, (you say) or *Copies*, represents their *Original*. This you have told us, in this same Speech, is God's Business too. *As God* (say you) *hath made in Heaven the Decree of our Election*; so he writes the *Copy* and *Counterpart* of it in our *Hearts*, by his *Spirit*. Thirdly, *If Trees are known by their Fruits*, (say you) but it's certain, if we have no more *Free-Will* than *Trees*, or no more *Choice* what sort of *Fruits* to bring forth, we must e'en leave it to the *Gardiner*, to make us of what sort he pleases. Fourthly, *If means ought never to be severed from their Ends*; (say you) but according to you, that is God's Work too: For as he *Ordains* the *End*, so he *Ordains* the *Means*, and *Performs* it himself in us, by his *Effectual Call*. And what signifies then, upon these Principles, all this *Exhortation to Diligence*? If I bid *Children* of three *Year Old* to write *Greek*, and then I take some of them by the *Hand*, and with their *Fingers*, Guided by my own *Hand*, I write it for them; the rest I let alone, but will whip them because they did not write it, what signifies then all my *Exhortation to Diligence*. If I bestow such *Exhortations* among them, all *Day long*, will it have any more *Effect* upon them, whose *Hands* I do *Guide*, than it will even upon those whose *Hands* I let alone? 'Twill only make them wait till I do it for them, and this must be all their *Diligence*. And the other can do nothing neither, till I do it for them; which if I never will, how is the one justly either *Punishable*, or *Rewardable*, more than the other?

Now by all that has been spoken on both sides, I think it is clearly apparent to any *Impartial Observer*, that all this great *Mystery*, of *Absolute Unconditionable Election* to *Heaven*, of all that are *Saved*, without any *Regard* to their *Works*, or so much as upon *fore-sight* of them, (which you make

of so High and Adorable a Nature, and seem to value it equally with any Article of the Creed, it not above it, by applying your, *O the Depth*, to this only, as the Sublimest Mystery in the Gospel) That all this great Mystery, I say, is, when all's done, none of the Scripture Mysteries at all ; nor so much as of the lowest Rank of Christian Doctrines ; but purely the Chimera, or Fiction of Enthusiastical Brains, or Over-heated Imaginations : If it have not a worse Author Originally, for the Confusion of Christianity, and the Destruction of the Reformation ; and of the same Design with *Jacob Behm's Misterium Magnum*, or the Great Mystery ; which is the Title, of a large Printed English Folio Book, made among the Orthodox beyond Seas, and Translated into English, which I have by me, Written purposely to Sublimate Religion, into a great Mystery of Unintelligible Nonsense : And who shou'd have been the First Author of such a Design, we need not go far to seek.

**Calvin.** Oh you are very Obstinate. I have many more Scriptures to give you yet.

**Ch. Man.** Pray let me give you but one First, What do you think of that Parable of our Saviours, *Luke 13, 6, 7, 8, 9.* Which perhaps you never well Consider'd yet, about the Figg-Tree, which in so many Years Expectation of Fruit, yeilded none. And at last, it was resolved, to try it another year longer, with more Cultivating, Digging, and Dunging, about it. Now if it was Determined from the begining, that Tree shou'd never have the means of Fructifying, or never be enabled to bear ; What was all that Labouring bestow'd upon it for ? Was it only to shew that the Tree was Conditionally Reprobated ? That it self cou'd not be right, if the Gard'ner did not as much, *bona fide*, for that Tree as he did for others, and give it all necessary means for bringing forth Fruit ; Else, what wou'd calling

calling to it for Fruit signify, what Impertinence wou'd that be? Grace we know is the means, and it God never gives that, our not Fructifying lies at his door. But if he gives the means, it lies at our own door. But you shou'd make a Different Parable for your sort of Tree, which you suppose every lost Man to be. Alas poor Tree! It was Predestinated, it shou'd have no means (which we see is contrary to our Saviours Parable) and yet it shall be Burnt for that, or for not bearing, or else only for its Original badness of Nature; which yet is confess'd to be no worse than that of all the other Trees, that have the means given them, which this is deny'd.

**Calvin.** But is not Election of Grace, to be supposed a thing that is done only at the sole will and pleasure of God.

**Ch-Man.** You have all this while Troubled your self with that General word Election, without Distinguishing the several sorts of Election, tho' I often hinted them to you. We must still Remember that there are Three sorts of Election, spoken of in Scripture. First, Election to Sufferings. Secondly, Election to Special Priviledges. Thirdly, Election to Heaven, or Salvation. The two First may be Absolute Election, the Third only Conditional. First, Election to Sufferings: The Christian Religion, especially in its first beginning, was to be a Suffering Religion, and to be Propagated by the Blood of Martyrs, *Sanguis Martyrum semen Ecclesie*, the Blood of Martyrs was the Seed of the Church. This was the method the wisdom of God ordained and Predetermined to convince to World by, of the truth of that Religion, which the Captain of our Salvation seal'd with his Blood, and all his Apostles, and multitudes of his chief Followers were to do the like; and indeed this proved an Argument too strong for all the Prejudice and Malice of the Jews, and Heathens; the settled Page

nism of the World, the Power of Heathen Princes, and all the Spiteful Opposition of Wicked People, and of Devils themselves, were forced to yeild to the Evidence of such Holy and Pious Men's Lives and Deaths; when they both Practis'd that Heavenly Doctrine, and Seal'd the Truth of it so freely, with the casting away, for it, all that was dear to them in this World, and at last their Life and Blood to confirm it, God therefore Pre-ordained, or Predestinated, many to suffer thus for the Propagation of his Truth.

**Calvin.** But what say you to that Positive Text. *Rom. 8, 29, 30. Whom he did foreknow, he also did Predestinate, and whom he did Predestinate them he also called. &c.*

**Ch. Man.** Again are you at that? If I have not satisfy'd it yet, I hope I shall: It you'l have Patience with the time it will take up. This very Text relates to what I last told you, that is Election to Sufferings, not to Heaven; as the whole Context will shew. The Apostle is all along Encouraging to suffer Persecution resolutely, for that wou'd make us more like to our Elder Brother Christ, says the 17th Verse. *Heirs to God, and joint Heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also Glorified together.* For says the 18. Verse. *I reckon that the Sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be Reveal'd in us.* And the 28 Verse, tells us, *we know that all things (and consequently Sufferings it self) work together for good to them that love God;* according to that, of the same Apostle to the Corinthians. *2 Cor. 4. 17. Our light Affliction which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. Worketh for us;* so here in *Rom. 8. 28. All things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are so called according to his purpose, that is the called*

called to such Sufferings, according to the purpose of his will, who hath pitched upon, and call'd them from among many other good Christians, to bear such Sufferings : For all Christians that were saved were not called in those times to Sufferings and Death, but only those whom God in his own Foreknowledge had Predestinated, and in time called to it ; And so the 30 Verse tells, *whom he did Predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also Justified, and whom he Justified, them he also Glorified*, That is plainly whom he did Predestinate to Suffer, them he called in due time to Suffer ; and whom he called to Suffer, on their Couragious discharge of that Duty, he Justified, and finally Glorified them ; And so the Apostle goes on to shew us that those Sufferings, cannot hurt us, but make us Happier, Verse 31. *If God be for us, who can be against us* ; as if he shou'd say, they may kill us, but that is nothing against us, if God be for us, that will turn to our good. So Verse 35. *Who shall Separate us from the Love of Christ, shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword.* (36 Verse) as it is written for thy sake are we kill'd all the day long. — *As Sheep for the Slaughter*, then Verse 38, and 39. The two last Verses of the Chapter, I am persuaded that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Power, nor things Present, nor things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to Separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And thus ends the whole Chapter, which we see relates so far, from Verse 17. Clearly to Sufferings, as the object of that Predestination mentioned in the 30 Verse, and so continued with respect to the same Sufferings to the end of the Chapter : And consonant to this, the same Apostle tells us, 1, Thess. 3, 3. *That no Man shou'd be moved by these Afflictions* ; For your selves know that we are appointed thereunto,



*thereunto*, which is the same thing with *Predestinated thereunto*, or *Elected thereunto*. So this has nothing to do with the Election or Predestination to Heaven in General.

**Calvin.** What say you to that plain Text, Rom. 9, 13. *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.* Is not here positive Election of one, and Reprobation of *Other*, *before either of them had done good or Evil?*

**Ch-Man.** This belongs to the Second sort of Election, that of Election to Special Priviledges, not to Heaven. Among all those that are to be Saved, God may, and does, Elect some out of them, to more Special Priviledges than others, and those Priviledges are of various kinds, and several sorts, *some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors, and Teachers.* Ephe. 4. 11. And we are told that Christ, out of all his Disciples, Elected, or chose Twelve; Luke 6, 13. And out of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, God Elected, or chose, (which is the same word in the Original, ἐξελέξατο) he Elected, I say, the Tribe of Levi only, to do the Service of God. And the 78 *Psal.* 67. verse, says, *he refused the Tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the Tribe of Ephraim;* No body can say that this Refusing, or Rejecting, was a Reprobating them, but only a Comparative Rejecting, that is a Rejecting them from such Special Priviledges, as he Elected the House of David for. And in the same manner that whole Nation of the Jews, the Children of Abraham, were Elected out of all the Nations in the World, to those Special Priviledges of being the Keepers of the Oracles of God; Of having Christ born among them, &c. But that did not Argue that all the rest of the World, but Abraham's Family, were Reprobated, and Damn'd; Because they were not Elected to the same Special Priviledges; For we find there were several Nations

still of the Posterity of *Noah*, even in *Abraham*'s time, who were Righteous Nations, as in the Story of *Abimelech*, King of *Gerar*. *Gen.* 20, 4. Where they are call'd a *Righteous Nation*; As indeed the sequel proved; For few Nations now-a-days, even among Christians, would be so tender as to make such dreadful guilt of the whole Nation, on their Kings Designing one Adultrous Marriage with another Man's Wife, even when they knew not that she was another's Wife; That was *Abraham*'s Wife, *Sarah*, whom *Abraham* called his Sister, least they shou'd kill him for her; For he ~~thought~~ *the* fear of God was not in that place, as the 11th verse, says; But he soon found his mistake, and that they were a Righteous Nation. Therefore, I say, the Election of *Abraham*'s Posterity to such Special Priviledges as God rejected all the rest of the World from, was no Reprobating, or Damning all the rest. Neither are we to believe that the Electing *Jacob*, *Abraham*'s Grand-Son, to be the First Stock or Foundation of that People, and the Rejecting *Esau* from it, was a Reprobating, or Damning of *Esau*, as some wou'd imply, by that Text, *Rom.* 9, 13. *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*; which only means a Comparative hatred, that is, loving him less than the other. As our Saviour uses the same Expression, *Luke* 14, 26. *If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple*; by which is meant only loveing them less than Christ, which every Christian must, for it wou'd be a great Wickedness Absolutely to hate those we are Comanded constantly to Love and Honour. But Christ meant a Comparative hatred, for in Comparison to a greater love, a less love may be counted, as it were, some degree of hatred, so that the meaning is, they must love their dearest Relations less

less than Christ, which is called by the name of *hating them*, and so God loved *Esau* less than *Jacob*, which is called *hating him*, and that only Comparatively to *Jacob*, because he loved him less.

**Calvin.** Was not *Esau* Reprobated to Hell? There is plain Scripture for it, that he never found saving Repentance, *Heb. 12, 17.* Where it is said, that *afterwards when he would have inherited the Blessing, he found no place for Repentance, tho' he sought it carefully with Tears.*

**Ch-Man.** They are mistaken that think this proves *Esau's* Reprobation. For that Repentance there spoken of him, means nothing of Spiritual Repentance for Heaven, but a Temporal Repentance for having sold his Birth-right, and consequently he lost the Temporal Blessing of Primogeniture, or First-born; when he had Absolutely and Totally sold away that, he cou'd not get it again by such Repentance tho' he sought it carefully, and with Tears; As we are told, *He lifts up his Voice and Wept,* *Gen. 27, 38.* And if there be after this manner any Profane Person among Christians, that would for a little Sensuality sell his Eternal Birth-Right, as *Esa* did his Temporal one, for a Mels of Pottage; let him have a care lest he lose it Eternally, and find no retrieving Repentance, for his Spiritual Birth-Right, more than *Esa* did for his Temporal: This we see has nothing to do with making *Esa* to be Damn'd; for all this passage did not belong to his Spiritual, but only to his Temporal Estate, or Blessing.

But this, together with the 9th Chap. of the *Romans* is all the proof the Rigid Predestinarians have, to make believe that *Esa* was Damn'd; And why must they needs have him Damn'd? Why; to maintain thereby that horrid Unconditional Absolute Decree of Reprobation, pass by God upon some People; Nay, on most People, from all Eternity (as they say) without any regard, to their

Works, or Life, good or bad, and so they quote about *Jacob* and *Esau*, Rom. 9, 11 11. *For the Children being yet unborn, neither having done any good or Evil, that the purpose of God, according to Election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her (their Mother) the Elder shall serve the Younger.* Now the place here Quoted, where this was said unto her, is Gen. 25. 23. *The Lord said unto her, two Nations are in thy Womb, and two manner of People shall be separated from thy Bowels; and the one People shall be stronger than the other, and the Elder shall serve the Younger.* This is plainly, that the Elder Nation, shall serve the Younger Nation; the two Nations of the *Edomites* and *Israelites*, being represented by the Names of *Esau* and *Jacob*, their first Progenitors; and therefore this Passage does not at all relate to the single Persons of *Esau* and *Jacob*, for it is not true, that *Esau* in his own Person ever served *Jacob*. But rather *Jacob* was Subject to him, during both their own Lives; as may be gather'd from the 32 and 33 Chapters of *Genesis*. But it is true, That the Posterity of *Esau*, served the Posterity of *Jacob*, the *Edomites* served the *Israelites*. And it's certain, *Esau* had also his own share of Election from God, to some Special Priviledges for himself too; tho' not the same sort, nor so great, as *Jacob's* were; for he was Elected of God to be a mighty Prince, and a Father of a great Nation.

*Calvin.* *That the purpose of God according to Election might stand, not of Works, but of him that calleth.* Is not this a plain Proof?

*Ch-Man.* All that this proves, is, that these Special Priviledges the Jews were Elected too, was through the purpose of God's own Free-Grace, not for any good things, or works, they had done to deserve it; for that God had Absolutely Purposed, or Predetermined, those Favours to that Jewish

ists Nation more than to the Edomites, even before  
 either of their Progenitors were Born, or had done  
 either Good or Evil. And so do we allow, that  
 all God's Elections to Special Priviledges are Abso-  
 lute, and Unconditional, and Fore-decreed, thro'  
 God's Arbitrary Will, and Free-Grace and Pleasure;  
 but not so in Elections to Salvation, or Rejections  
 to Damnation; that goes always *according to their*  
*Works*, as the Scripture constantly assures us. As  
 even in a Family, where the Children are all Obe-  
 dient, the good Father (tho' he give all their due)  
 may bestow some particular little Favour, to one,  
 perhaps, one day more than to the rest, and it may  
 be to another, another day, without being accoun-  
 table for any Reason of his Choice, but his own  
 kindness and free pleasure; but he will not utterly  
 Disinherit any, or deprive them of their Portion  
 for ever, Arbitrarily; but only for their Undutiful  
 Wickedness, or bad Works, or Doings. And so  
 'tis with God Almighty, the Fountain of all Justice,  
 Equity, Goodness, and Mercy; in all his Elections  
 to, and Rejections from, Special Priviledges, or Ar-  
 bitrary Favours, he does them meerly by his own  
 Solitary Will, Pleasure, Free-Grace, and Absolute  
 Decree, without any regard to any thing else, or  
 any other Cause, or Ingredient; because no body  
 can then complain, or find fault, or think hard:  
 for hath not the Potter power of his own Clay,  
*Rom. 9. 21. To make one Vessel to Honour, another*  
*to Dishonour*, that is, Comparatively, to a less Ho-  
 nourable Use; for no Potter makes his Vessels Ab-  
 solutely to Dishonour, nor makes most of his Ves-  
 sels meerly to dash them to pieces; but he makes  
 some for the most Honourable Place of the House,  
 the Table; others for the Kitchen, or the most  
 Dishonourable, or less Honourable Place of the  
 House: Shall thole ask the Potter, *why hast thou*  
*made me so?* For as there was Wisdom enough in  
 so



so doing; so to each particular Vessel, it wou'd be Answer enough then, because 'twas my Pleasure; but if the Potter wou'd make most of all his Work, only and purposely to dash them to Bits, the Answer then, that 'twas his Pleasure, wou'd not Justify the Wisdom, nor Excuse the Tyranny of his so doing; especially if his Vessels cou'd be sensible of intollerable Pain, and endless Misery, by his so Dealing with them, and capable to BlaspHEME him to Eternity for it. Now by the Comparison of a Potter, This, and this only, is the Arbitrary Power, God Pleadst for over his Creatures, *about Special Priviledges*, (in respect of the main thing Canvased in those Chapters to the *Romans*, which was the Difference God made between Jews and Gentiles) cannot God, even Arbitrarily, without Injustice, or wronging either Side, or without the Imputation of any hard Dealing, chuse which Side he will, by the Election of them, to greater Special Priviledges than the rest. But if we shou'd speak (which is not the Intent of those Texts) about God's Election to Heaven, about Disinheriting, Saving, or Damning of Mankind; then (as the Example I Proposed of a Father in a Family) God makes their Life, or Works, Faithfulness, or Unfaithfulness in Christ, the Rule and Standard of his Eternal Decrees, of Election in Christ to Heaven, or his Reprobation to Satan in Hell.

**Calvin.** But what say you to *Rom. 9. 22. What if God, willing to shew his Wrath, and to make his Power known, endured with much Long-Suffering, the Vessels of Wrath, fitted for Destruction.* This I know, the Maintainers of Absolute Reprobation, do Insist on, but I am not of their Side.

**Ch Man.** How can you Answer it then? unless you take our way, and then it will throw down your own Opinion of Absolute Election too, which indeed we think no better than theirs, of Absolute

**Absolute Reprobation.** Nay, if your's be True, their's is True. But they are both all alike Pernicious. For understanding of that Text, we shou'd Observe, that this is spoken with Relation to *Pharaoh*, the 17 Verse, says of *Pharaoh*, *For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my Power in thee.* Now this Raising him up, does not mean the First Creating him ; but the preserving him Alive, after he had been Reprobated, that is, after he had harden'd his own Heart so long, past the Sixth Miracle ; when it was then said, God at last harden'd his Heart ; and that was the time of his Final Reprobation ; and then Excision, or Cutting him off, was his due ; but God continued him Alive, or kept him up still so much longer, to shew his Power in him at the Red Sea, and that God's Name might be thereby declared throughout all the Earth, Verse 17. This was a Mercy to *Pharaoh*, to keep him so much longer Alive, when he shou'd have been all that while in Hell: Therefore (as it follows in the next Words) *He will have Mercy, on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth.* That is, as God may shew some Degrees of Mercy, for a time, even to the wickedest Reprobates ; so the time of hardening to Final Reprobation, is in his own Hands too, without any Impeachment to his Mercy, or any Imputation of hard Dealing ; for to him only it belongs to Judge, when the Final Reprobation, or Hardening from God, is to be sent to Obstinate Sinners, that harden their own Hearts so long.

The next Verse (19) starts an Objection. *Thou wilt say then to me, why doth he yet find fault ? for who hath resisted his Will.* This relates still to that Business of *Pharaoh*, why did God yet find fault with him, after himself had harden'd him, for who cou'd in that Case resist his Will ? This Fault we find God did Tax him with, *Exod. 9. 17. As yet Exaltest thou*

*about thy self.* Now this wou'd be an Impudent Capitulating with God, to ask, Why he shou'd so soon harden him, and after find Fault with him; for may he not harden an Obstinate Sinner when he pleases, and Expostulate with him, or Reprove him after, as long as he pleases. Therefore says the next Words, Verse 20. *May, but O Man, who art thou, that repliest against God, has not God, that made the Sinner, an Equitable Power, to shew him Mercy, in sparing his Life as long as he pleases; and to harden him upon his Obstinacy, at what Season he pleases? And more than that (Verse 21.) can't he, as a Potter does with his Clay, among all his Creatures, bestow more Signal, or Honourable, Favours to some, than others? Then comes, with Relation to Pharaoh, Verse 22. What if God willing to shew his Wrath, and to make his Power known, endured with much Long Suffering, the Vessels of Wrath, fitted to Destruction. That is, what if God, for the greater Manifestation of his Anger against all Persevering and Obdurate Sinners, and to make his Vengeance, even in this Life, more Signal and Remarkable to the World against such, shou'd with much Patience, forbear Exterminating such Reprobates fitted for Destruction, even when the time of their Excision is justly due; until an occasion be taken of making their Destruction more Terrible and Exemplary to the World; as he did with Pharaoh, and his Army, at the Red Sea; and as he intended at last to do with the Obstinate Jews, and which he did in time Accomplish in the dreadful Destruction of Jerusalem, the greatest Instance of Vengeance, the Earth ever saw since the Flood of Noah. And for this, Pharaoh is so long Insisted on, as a Parallel to the Jews. The Obstinate Jews were against the Gospel, and stuck upon the Merits of their Election, their Privileges, and their Mosaick Works, in Opposition to the Righteousness,*

ness which is by the Gospel Faith in Christ, and set up the Legal Righteousness of Circumcision, which is called the Law of Works, or the Deeds of the Law, meaning *Moses* his Ceremonial Law, in Opposition to the Faith and Works of Christian Righteousness; and thought to be Justified without that, by their own Ceremonial Works of the Mosaic Law. And by reason of their Special Privileges, they thought themselves, as it were, God's only Favourites, and all other Nations, all Gentiles, Damn'd and Reprobated. And that too, for some Merit they fancy'd God saw in themselves, or for their Forefather's Deserts; which makes the Apostle so often Insist, that all was the Effect of *God's Free Grace*, not of *Works* of theirs, for them to Boast of: For all were under Sin at first; and that God may, and will, by the same Free Grace, Call other Nations also; and that this he Purposed, Pre-determined, and Absolutely Decreed from the beginning, according to the Purpose of his own Will and Council, in his own Foreknowledge; to bring the Gentiles to the Gospel at last, by the Preaching of the Apostles, after the Jews had rejected it. And this gave the whole occasion of those Intricate Disputes of *St. Paul*, who where-ever he Condemns or Undervalues Works, in Opposition to Faith, he still means those Jewish Works: For *St. Paul* being the Apostle of the Gentiles (as he calls himself in several Places) he was still Disputing and Pleading for the Gentiles, against the Jews, who wou'd needs run them all down to Hell, and wou'd allow no Salvation to them that wou'd not be Proselytes to their Circumcision, and to the whole Ceremonial Law of *Moses*. And this appears more particularly, in *Acts* 22. 22, when *St. Paul* spoke of going to the Gentiles; 'tis said, *They gave him Audience unto his Word, and then lift up their Voices, and said, away with*

with such a Fellow from the Earth, for it is not fit that he should live. And indeed this whole 9th Chap. and the 8th Chap. to the Romans, and several others, are so Mysteriously Written that Vulgar Readers cannot easily understand them. So that these, and the like, are the things St. Peter said in his Brother Paul's Writings were hard to be understood; which they that are Unstable and Unlearn'd, do wrest to their own Destruction. 2 Pet. 3. 16. But I have thus Explain'd, as clearly as I cou'd in so short a Compals, the most difficult of those Places of Scripture, that are usually Misunderstood, and that not by any Novel-way of my own, but according to the Sense of the best Interpreters of the Church, both Ancient and Modern.

**Calvin.** Then you allow those two sorts of Elections, to Sufferings, and to Special Priviledges, to be Absolute, and why not Election to Heaven also.

**Ch-Man.** Because it is the Covenant God makes with us in Christ, Believe, and thou shalt be Saved, Mar. 16. 16. Acts, 16. 31. Rom. 10. 9. Sec If thou Believe in Christ (that is, Believe in him, so as to Obey him) thou shalt be Saved, here is the Condition of our Election to Heaven, and this is the Tenure of the Covenant God has made with us in Christ; if we Comply with these Terms of Salvation, we shall be Chosen to Heaven, otherwise not; and we in our Baptism do Covenant, that we will Comply with them. And the Nature of all Covenants suppoles, that if one Party wholly breaks his Side of the Covenant, the other Party is not Tyed to his: Now, if God had Fore-ordained, Pre-determined, and Absolutely Unconditionally Decreed, in the Council, of his own Will, to Elect to Heaven, every particular Person that is Saved, without regard to their Works, which is the Doctrine of the Absolute Uncondi-

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onal Predestinarians, then there is no Covenant at all made with Mankind : neither First, nor Second Covenant, that the Scripture so often speaks of, will have any Sense. A Covenant is one thing, but an Absolute, Free, Unviolable Promise, without any Condition, is another thing ; for do we what we will then, we cannot Void, Break, nor Forfeit that Promise ; especially, if the unalterable Decree of the never failing God has made it ; and so all that God has Transacted with us, shou'd then no longer be call'd *Covenants*, but all Absolute *Unconditional Promises*. It may as well be called a Covenant with a Logg of Wood, for me to say, I will Square it, and Shape it, and make an handsome Image of it, and Place it decently in my House, and after it is made, I will make it to move with Springs and Devices, just when and where I wou'd have it, only at my own sole Will and Pleasure. All this is but a bare Promise, and no Covenant of mine with the Wood.

**Calvin.** What is it that makes any thing a Covenant ?

**Ch-Man.** I told you already, that a Covenant always Implies some Conditions to be kept on both Sides. But an Absolute Unconditional Promise, is another thing. That which makes any thing a Covenant, is dealing with a Free Agent, that is not only capable to understand his Bargain, but also has a Power, a Will, a Liberty, as a Free Agent, to keep, or not to keep, his part of the Covenant. Thus God has dealt with us ; he has first made us Free Agents, given us Understanding, Will, and Power, to Rule our own Choice, and Actions ; Then he Reveals himself to us, and shews us what is good, and what his Blessed Will wou'd have us do, for his Glory, and our own Happiness ; and Covenants with us, that if we will do these things, we shall Live, if not, we shall Dye.

Here is the First Covenant ; then we by our first Parents broke this Covenant, and were liable to Death; then God in his own Mercy, and of his own Free Grace and Goodness, makes a Second Covenant in Christ, *the Second Adam*. That tho' we were, and are still, to Dye Temporally here on Earth, for the Breach of the First Covenant ; yet we shou'd not Dye Eternally, if we received the Redeemer he wou'd send us, even that Saviour of Mankind, who was to come, and did come, in the fullness of Time. Mean while, because we cou'd no longer, after the Fall, Live in perfect Unsinning Obedience, we were yet required to Live in a State of Repentance, as Vertuously as we cou'd. There was no necessity on us to Live in Villany, Knavery, or Debauchery. Sincere Honesty, and Godly Purity, and Charity, and Temperance, was not impossible for the main part of our Life, tho' Subject to some Lapses and Imperfections. And when Christ came, he taught us these Duties more perfectly, he Bound us to the Performance of them more strictly; by Sacramental Covenants, in Baptism, and the Lord's-Supper ; and thereby also gives us more help of his Grace in those Sacraments, to enable us to perform those Vertues required of us ; and upon our living such a vertuous Life, at least, the *Working thus in his Vineyard*, some considerable part of the Day of our whole Life, so as not to Conclude it finally in a wicked Habit of Life, but in a true Penitent State of Vertuous Living, and Righteous Practice, of Soberness, Righteousness, and Godliness, in this present World ; upon our thus Receiving Christ with Obedient Hearts, Receiving him for our *King, Priest, and Prophet* ; that is, Obeying his Laws, Believing his Doctrine, and Submitting to, and Sanctifying our Lives by, his Holy Ordinances ; upon doing this, and upon these Conditions, we have God's Promise,

mise, that we shall be Saved, and our Bodies restored to us again in a Glorious Condition, at the end of this Dispensation; and both Body and Soul, Translated into Heaven, there to be Happy for all Eternity; but if we neglect doing this, we shall be Damn'd.

This is the Second Covenant, God has made with us in the Second *Adam*, *Christ Jesus* our Saviour. Now can any thing be more Contradictory to, or more Essentially destroy, all these Nations, than to Believe the Rigid Predestinarian's Scheme, that all People, and every Individual Person, were Absolutely, Unconditionally, without any respect whatsoever to their Works, or regard at all to their Life, Predestinated, Sentenced, Elected, and Decreed from all Eternity, each Person to some Irreversible respective Doom, without any Degree of, or the least Thought of, the Goodness or Badness of their Lives, giving the least Consideration to the Sentence pronounced on them. This is it they make of the *Absolute Freeness* of God's Election, the Freeness of his Grace and Redemption. We own the Grace of God is freely given, and so was our Life too, our Reason, Will, and our Faculties, and whatsoever was necessary to make us free Agents; and after the Fall of Mankind, our Will being Corrupted, and so Invincibly bent to all Evil, The Grace of God, so far as was fit to Ballance the Enslavement of our Will to Evil, was as necessary to make us free Agents again, as our First Creation was, else we cou'd not have a free Choice to do any good. This Grace therefore God gave us Freely, as Freely, as he First Made us, and then he expects our using this Grace to that Purpose, of restraining our own Will, from chusing evil Actions, and exerting our Endeavours, and Faculties, to Co-operate with this Grace of God, to the Producing of a good Life.

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This if we do not, God will take that Grace from us again, and that most justly, tho' he waits long in his Mercy, before he does so. And this is the meaning of our Saviour, *Mar. 4. 25. To him that hath, more shall be given; and from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath*, that is, he that hath not made use of the Grace of God given him, it shall be taken away; but he that uses it shall have more. God gives to all Men at First, that Grace which is sufficient, with their own Endeavours, to bring them to a Capacity of vertuous Living, and if they will not use it, 'tis their own Fault, and they shall be Condemn'd for it: If they will us it, they shall 'scape. And when God withdraws this Grace, finally and totally from any Man, and leaves him to himself, he is then Reprobated, and lost, for he can never Emerge, or Recover then; True Saving Repentance can never be perform'd without Grace, and when that Grace is for ever Removed, this is the deplorable State of utter Reprobation, or Rejection from God for ever.

**Calvin.** But did not God make his Decrees from the Beginning? Are not his Foreknowledge, and Decrees Eternal?

**Ch. Man.** We allow all that, and Grant, that God has Decreed, even from the Beginning, this Conditional Election, of true Penitent sinners to Heaven, and Reprobating Persevering Transgressors, and Rejecting them to Hell Eternally,

This indeed, shou'd reasonably quicken our Endeavours to some purpose, and make us have a dreadful Care how we persevere to resist the Holy Spirit of God, since we know not which will be the last Sin God will forbear with, or that will, in God's Account, *fill up the measure of our Iniquity. Matth. 23. 32.* And this shews the undispenfible necessity of Complying with that Advice of the Psalmist, which we hear at every Lord's-Day Service,

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and so often put it off. *To Day if you will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts,* and that of the Apostle, *to work out our Salvation with fear and trembling.* Philip. 2. 12. *Fearing* lest we begin too late, and have not time. For it is God, (says the next Verse) *that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* It is God that of his good Pleasure gives us that Grace, without which we could do nothing, Nay, without him we could neither Live, Move, nor have our Being: But yet there's none of us doubts, but that he has given us Power to do something our selves too, and thus we can move our selves homeward this Day, for if we shou'd stay here, till he carries us without our own Endeavour, we might stay long enough. And so it is in our going Heaven-ward. And therefore we are Commanded to *work out our own Salvation,* for then God Co-operates with us, and in us, *to will and to do.* *God worketh in us, both to will and to do,* if we will work along with him; otherwise not: therefore work out your own Salvation, says St. Paul. But how can this be? Or what signifies this Exhortation, and all the rest of the like thro' the whole Bible? It without any regard to a Man's Works, 'tis already Decree'd where every Man shall go, and that before he was Born, or had done Good or Evil, and that he was unalterably Predestinated to Election, or Reprobation, without the least Regard too, or Reflection on, what his Future Works or Life shou'd be. So as that it shou'd not have any the least Influence or Motive on the Sentence pass'd upon him. This is a very ill Consequence, that unavoidably follows that Horrid Doctrine, that it will make Carnal Security, it's natural Effect; since it will make many of those that strongly love their Sins, be apt to think, either that they cannot do any thing, or that what they do will signify nothing, to their final Condition.

Calvin.



**Calvin.** Nay, but we say 'tis very necessary to Live well, because it will assure your self of your own Election: And it will make you see your Reprobation if you Live Ill.

**Ch: Man.** And is that all? But that Ill Liver may Answer, what need a Man be such a Fortune-Teller; and what good will it do him, to be Persuaded either one way or t'other, seeing his Lot is fixed? And perhaps he may be mistaken too, however he Live; for, according to their Doctrine; there's no sure Rule to be gather'd from the Life; for Grace, say they, is Irresistable; and it comes only when it pleases, and can do the Work as well in a Minute, as in an Age, and if God has Decreed the End, he has Decreed the Means, and so thro' the Efficacy of the free Almighty Grace of God, the wickedest Man may be Saved at the last Gasp. And so we wheel about, to the Popish *Articulo Mortis* Doctrine again; of wicked Peoples being Saved in the Article, or Minute of Death; only the Papists Save them by their Charming Irresistable Ceremonies, and these by their *Irresistable Grace*, if God has so Decreed: And if he has not, who can help it; for what Counsell of Life, cou'd in that Case of a Man's Reprobation, or Præterition, have done any good for his Future State? Sinners are too apt Naturally to Flatter themselves into Sloth and Security, and will not this Doctrine, add *Laudanum* to their Lethargy, and make them apter to Sleep on in their Sins for ever:

**Calvin.** If that were so, I own it wou'd be a very bad Consequence. But it is your way to load us always with bad Consequences, which we think do not follow.

**Ch: Man.** They do not indeed follow from the Doctrine of Præscience alone, nor from Prædestination, as the Church of *England* holds it. But they

they follow most inevitably from your Doctrine of denying Free-Will, and denying any Condition for our Election to Heaven. I have shewn you two very bad Consequences from that unreasonable Doctrine. First, That it destroys the Nature of all Covenants between God and Man. Secondly, That it naturally weakens Industry, and Encourages Carnal Security, and Sloth. Thirdly, A Third dreadful Consequence from that terrible Doctrine, is, that it makes People too apt to fall into Unworthy, or at least, Unlovely Apprehensions of the Nature of God. As in the first Place, to have a double Heart, is no good Character in a Man it self; and yet this Doctrine, of Absolute Unconditional Decrees of Irrespective, Predestinate, Election and Reprobation, or Præteritions, must suppose, that there shou'd be a double Will in God, which is the same thing with a double Heart: For it must be supposed, that God has one Will whereby he Willeth, and Decreeeth Irreversibly the Reprobation, or Præterition, and Damnation of such Multitudes of Human Creatures, and even of those that are Baptized in his Church; And yet he must be supposed to have another will, whereby he willeth not the Death of any Sinner; and that he declares with an Oath, *Ezech. 33, 11. As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the Death of him that Dieth, but that the Wicked turn from his way and live, turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye Die, O House of Israel.* What shall we think of all this, and a hundred times more, such Warnings, Earnest Pressings, and Pathetick Exhortations, Expostulations, and Persuasives to all wicked People in General, to come to the Terms of Salvation, and be Saved. Surely, if his former Absolute Decree, for their Reprobation, or Præterition, were true, this wou'd be but a Mockery to press People so Earnestly, to that which he had before resolved they

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shou'd never do: for if he Decreed they shou'd never turn and live, why wou'd he say all this? And that with the Solemnity of an Oath.

In the next place, we all shou'd know, That the Nature of God is to be Just, Holy, Merciful, and Good, in the highest Degree: But all these Attributes are blemish'd by this Horrible Doctrine. First, His *Justice* can be no way Magnify'd, in the designing to raise his own Glory by such means as the Decreed Destruction, and Eternal Misery of Millions of Mankind, made on purpose for that end; And Decreed to be Punished, for that Course of Sin which God decreed shou'd be done, for his own Glory, even before they were born; and which therefore they cou'd not possibly avoid the doing of. And whereas God proposes himself, and his own Nature, for the Example which Mankind shou'd imitate: This wou'd seem too much to Justify the Tyrannical French Monarch, in his destroying so many Hundred Thousand Christians as he has done, only for his own Glory, for *the Glory of his Arms*. Secondly, God's *Holiness*, cannot be Magnify'd in Decreeing that so many vile Sins shou'd be unavoidably committed, by his positive Predestinating that it shou'd be so, to fit and qualify Men for his Eternal Wrath, and so they are born to live under a fatal Decreed Necessity of Sinning on to Damnation. Thirdly, How does it lean hard upon the Truth of God, and his Sincerity, to find so many constant offers, and tenders of Grace, Mercy, Reconciliation to them, and Requirings of Repentance, and Faith, and Holy Life, from them that he first Decreed shou'd never have any of all that. And 'tis certain, if he Decreed that of his own Free-Will and Pleasure, he had pleasure then in his own Decrees, and yet he swears, as he Lives, he has *No Pleasure in the Death of him that Dieth*.

And

• And Lastly, His Goodness, wou'd suffer most of all his Attributes, by fancying God to do such things; as even a Hard-hearted Man upon Earth wou'd scarcely do; To make Sensible and Rational Creatures, without any manner of Cause or Provocation, Eternally Miserable, by an Act of Attainder, as it were, in the Courts and Records of Heaven, before the first of them ever came into the World. All these particulars do too much Sully the Excellent, Amiable, Ideas, we ought to have of the Most Blessed, Most Admirable, and Most Lovely Nature of God.

**Calvin.** Have you any more bad Consequences to lay upon us?

**Ch. Man.** Yes, A Fourth Grievous Consequence from this terrible Doctrine is, That it takes away the very Foundation of all future Rewards and Punishments; For if Man have not a Free-Will, and Power to Rule his Actions, then he is not *compos mentis*, and as Madmen and Fools cannot Justly be hang'd for committing Felony; much less should Men be Damn'd Eternally for those Sins they cou'd not help, especially if they were compell'd to do it, by the Fatal Irresistable Decree of Preterition, Predestinating them to be Damn'd, and consequently Predestinating the means to that Damnation, that is, a wicked Life first, to justify their future Doom after. Nor will all the frivolous Evasions that are given by these Rigid Predestinarians do any good to their Cause. They'll say God does not Decree or force the Sin to be committed, but only leaves Men to themselves. But if God has made Men so that they cannot but Sin, if he has denyed them a Free-Will to avoid it, and left them under a necessity of doing it; is not that all one as if he had made them do it? Again they'll say, God's Reprobating a Man, is not any positive Act of God's Influence upon him, but only an Act of

Preterition, or passing him by, when he Elects the rest: But if I Build several Houses, so as that I know they will and must fall without Supporters, and when I Support others, I pass by this, will that Preterition excuse me from being the Author of it's Fall? Indeed if the Houses were Rational Creatures, and had Wills to chuse Falling or Standing, and I gave this House such ordinary Supporters, as I gave to others, but it will not use them, but will chuse to Fall, when others chuse to Stand, then I am Blameless.

And this is God's Dealing with Mankind, he gives all People what Grace is sufficient for each to Ballance his Will to a Free Choice, either of Good, or Evil. See how Solemnly God Attests this, *Deus. 30. 19. I Call Heaven and Earth to Record this Day against you, that I have set before you, Life and Death, Blessing and Cursing, therefore Chuse Life. And in the 15th Verse, 'tis Called, Life and Good, Death and Evil; therefore chuse Life.* Now if God gives us this Choice, he must give us a Free-Will, to make the Choice; for leaving us unavoidably to one side, without a possibility of taking the other, is no Choice, and 'tis but a Mockery to give it that Name.

**Calvin.** Have you any more yet, of your Ill Consequences?

**Ch. Man.** Yes, a Fifth Grievous Consequence, from this Monstrous Doctrine, is, that it spoils all the true Notions of Grace, which is to be a help to our Corrupt Nature, to Ballance our Evil Inclinations, and set our Will free from its total Enslavement, or Captivity to Sin, thus the Scripture calls it, Grace, to help in time of need. *Heb. 4. 16. And find Grace to help in time of need.* But these Men make Grace not a help, but a thing that must do the whole Work, as if God scorned, that Man shou'd be any Sharer with his Grace, in the Work of Salvation, contrary to God's Word, that Com-

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mands us to *Work out our own Salvation*. Philip. 2. 12. And contrary to that of St. Peter, 2. Per. 1. 10, that bids us, *Give Diligence to do those things, that will make our Calling and Election sure*. But these Men do make Grace so Absolute and Uncontrollable, that they Ascribe the Almighty Power of God to it, and make it Irresistible, and Indefectible; and indeed so it must be, if their Scheme be true: For if all must inevitably be Damn'd, but those only, that God by his Willful and Inviolable Decree, resolved to Force into the way of Salvation, and Rescue from Destruction, whether they would or no; then the Means of Grace, which he uses to this End, must be Irresistible, else it would not perform its Work; and after it comes, it must persevere too, and so be Indefectible, and not to be Driven away again: No Falling from it: God scorns, say they, to be Baffled, in the Rejecting of, or Departing from his Grace; hence comes their *Avowed Doctrines of the Irresistibility of Grace*. And Secondly, The *Perseverance* of them, that once have Grace, or the *no falling from Grace*. Both which I have spoken to already, and disproved them. And both of them are very Mischievous to Human Industry, and would give a Baneful Check to that Diligence, commanded by St. Peter. And this is the Fifth Grievous Consequence, from this monstrous Doctrine, that it Spoils and Abuses all the true Notions of God's Helping Grace, by making it Omnipotent, Irresistible, and Indefectible, or no Falling from it; to the great Destruction, and Bane of Christian Industry and Diligence.

Calvin. I hope you have no more of your Ill Consequences.

Ch. Man. More than perhaps you would be willing to hear. But I shall trouble you only with one more at present, of the Ill Consequences from this Perilous Doctrine—That is,

Sixthly,

Sixthly, The great Aptness it has, to make some Fall into Spiritual Pride; and others, into Presumptuous Atheistical Living; and others, even Innocent People, into Incurable Despair. On the one Hand, when some People have got an Opinion, that they are of the Number of those Elect, Predestinated to Heaven; and Consequently, that they can never Fall from that Estate, by any means, having Framed to themselves some Signs, and certain Tokens, that they have Saving Grace; as, it may be, a Blind Zeal for those they think the Godly Party, with a Hatred to all others, they count the Wicked; or some Enthusiastical Heats in Extemporary Prayers; or other like Symptoms; or by a strong Fancy, and long Labour, to possess their Hearts with this Flattering Opinion of themselves: For this their Teachers perswade them to by all means, Calling it *Saving Faith*, to have a firm Persuasion of their own Election in Christ, which is usually but a Charm of Imagination. When they come to this, I say, and think themselves thereby as sure of Heaven, as if they were already in it, for nothing, not the greatest Sins, can after hinder them of it; for the Sins of the Elect, you must know, they say, are but Satan's Tricks upon them, which God will wink at, and Grace be never the farther from them, but will do it's whole Work in good time, when it self pleases. When this is their Beliet, what Spiritual Pride of themselves, and Contempt of others, will it not lead them into: All the *Fear and Trembling* wherewith we are commanded to *work out our own Salvation*, will be far from them; and they will not think themselves under any great necessity to Work at all; since Grace must do the whole Work for them: The most of their Work, will be only to Work their own Minds and Fancies, into a higher and fuller Assurance, that they are Absolutely Elect;

Red; and then, when they think themselves God Almighty's Darlings, what will not their Pride venture, in making bold with him? From hence comes all that Spiritual Pride, some of them shew, that Peevishness, Passion, Cenloriousness, Uncharitableness, Separation from the Established Church, and Contention with their Governors.

There are some of Opinion, That it was this Notion of God's Absolute Unalterable Decrees, Satan had got into his mind, when he was an Angel in Heaven, that made him venture on such Pride as he shew'd; because he reckoned God cou'd not alter his Decree, and cast him from Heaven; or that if he had from all Eternity, Decreed to cast him from Heaven, then all he cou'd do, cou'd not keep him in it, and so he ventured that Extravagance of Pride, and Sinning Rebelliously against God. 'Tis true, we are not told in Scripture, what was the occasion of his Pride, or what Principle it ran upon; but it is very hard to hit upon any other so likely; for he cou'd not but know, that it was impossible for him to be too hard for his Maker. But finding he was Made (and according Decreed to be) an Arch-Angel of great Station, he might accordingly Judge himself to be one of God Almighty's Darlings, (and we know those that think themselves Pets, are the aptest to be Insolent to their Parents) and so he might venture on the Confidence of Fate, being unalterable; and that do what he wou'd, he cou'd neither be better nor worse, than God had Decreed for him from all Eternity. But finding himself deceived in this, by the Event of his being cast out of Heaven; it seems, he still endeavour'd to put the same Cheat upon the World, and has much prevail'd with it. Among the Heathens, the Stoical Sect, even great Philosophers, maintain'd a necessary and unalterable Fate in all Events; among the Jews, the Sect of

of the Effens maintain'd the same. The Mahometans, generally have the same Doctrine; and 'tis stranger, that among Christians too, there shou'd now be such a Sect of Fatahists, Call'd, Rigid Predestinarians.

I need only but hint at the aptness this Doctrine has, to lead some into Presumptuous Atheistical Living; or as our Church Article words it, *into wretchedness of most unclean Living*: For what can be more natural to the Inclinations of the Flesh, than to think it is no matter what they do, if this Doctrine be true; if their Lot be Fixed, and all Irreversibly Decreed. Which is the true Reason that so many Atheistical Writings are the greatest Disputers for, and Defenders of, this Doctrine.

Now as on the one Hand, this Doctrine is so apt to make some People fall into Spiritual Pride, or else, into Presumptuous Atheistical Living; So on the other Hand, 'tis as apt to make another sort, even Innocent Livers, that are timorous and solicitous about their Salvation, fall into utter Despair. We have too many sad Stories, of those that have made themselves away, meerly upon this Account; that they had got a strong Fancy, they were not of the Number of those, that from all Eternity, were Absolutely, without any Regard to their Life, Predestinated to be Saved; but rather were in the Preterition Lot, to be Damn'd. If you say, their good Life is a Sign, they are of the Elect, they'll tell you, Papists, Nay, and all sorts of Hereticks, many of them live as good Lives, and pray as much. But the Absolute Election, and Preterition, takes no notice of that; but was fix'd Irreversibly, without any regard to our Life, or so much as foresight of it, and so they'll continue in their Despair, say what you can, allowing those Principles. And many of these indeed were  
very

very Innocent People, that have thus destroyed themselves, only by their Ill Hap, to have been Disciples to this horrible Doctrine, *horrible Decree*, the horrible Decree, as the good Melancthon call'd it.

A terrible Example of which (among multitudes that might be produced) we have freshly given us, even since we were far gone in this Dispute; of a good Woman in the Country, that Shot her self to Death, about a Month ago; and having Life in her some Hours after the Fact, she declared, she did it because she Fear'd, or Believed, she was not Absolutely Predestinated to be Saved. She was at last made Sensible that was a mistake; upon which, she Repented of her Fact, and Exclaimed at this very Parish we are now in, tho' herself dwelt at a distance from it, yet she used to come sometimes here, where she learn'd, from a certain Preacher, that Doctrine of Predestination, which brought her to Death.

I shall tire you now no farther, with the Evil and Dreadful Consequences of this fatal Doctrine. I think, I have shewn enough of them, to make any honest Christian abhor it.

**Calvin.** You own a Divine Predestination, your self, Election, Reprobation, Foreknowledge, and Decrees, of God. Pray then, let me have a more particular Account of your Scheme and Tenents, in all these.

**Ch Man.** That I shall willingly, and briefly Explain to you. It is the same which the true Church of England holds and maintains, according to the Scriptures. We own, that God's Omniscience, or Foreknowledge, did from all Eternity, foresee all future Events; and that he foresaw so many Angels, when he made them, wou'd Fall; and that Mankind, whom he made to People Heaven, in supplying the Place of the Fallen Angels, wou'd



by the Craft of Satan, be Seduced to Rebellion, and Fall, but yet he resolved so far to frustrate Satan's Malice; that even out of that Corrupt Mass of Fallen Mankind, he wou'd gather to himself, what Number were sufficient for his own purpose, of supplying Heaven; which it's true, had been much sooner done, if none of them had Fallen, and so this Earthly World might have been sooner ended; but as the Case was, he Resolved to let this World last so long, as till his design'd Number shou'd be Completed by them, that wou'd Convert to him at last. For this End of his that he had Ordain'd, he also Ordain'd the Means according to the purpose of his Will, and in that he magnified his Mercy and Goodness, to the whole Generation of Mankind, and shewed the Riches of his Grace, in sending his Son to Dye for all Men, *That as in Adam, all Dyed, so in Christ, shou'd all be made Alive*; As capable now of the Second Terms of Salvation, as they were of the First Terms, before *Adam's* Fall, if they Embraced and Comply'd with the Second Covenant, in their Redeemer. To which Purpose, and to Enable them thereunto, God resolved freely to give them sufficient Grace, to free their depraved Corrupted Wills, from any necessity of Chusing to be Wicked still; that so being free Agents, they might, if they wou'd, Chuse Good, and avoid Evil; Chuse Vertue, and avoid Vice; Chuse a Blessed Saviour's Directions, by Faith in him, Soberness, Righteousness, and Godliness, in this present World, and avoid Satan's Snares, Ungodliness, and Worldly Lusts; and so he Decreed, even from all Eternity, that as many as wou'd Chuse to do thus, shou'd be Elected, or Predestinated, to Heaven, and as many as wou'd not, but wou'd Chuse the Evil Way, and therein remain Impenitently, and finally, shou'd be Rejected, Reprobated, and

Doom'd,

Doom'd, to Satan's Society, in Hell for ever. Now, here is nothing in all this, but what is agreeable to Scripture, and most exactly agreeable to Infinite Mercy and Goodness, and Justice too. Nor are we Tempted by this, as is Objected, to Sacrifice to our own Nets; or Boast in our Selves, or our own Merits; for we were utterly lost by the Fall, nor cou'd we do any thing to satisfy God's Justice, much less to merit his Favour. But of his own free Mercy and Compassion, he sent his Son to Dye for us, and sent his free Grace to move us, to accept of his Second Covenant, that is offer'd us in his Son's Blood; so that to this free Grace of his, we Owe all, we Disclaim all Merits in our Works, or in our Faith either; and we rely solely on the Merits of Christ, and his Sufferings; which yet we are Assured, tho' for all Mankind extensively, both as to the Efficacy and Designation of it, yet that Satisfaction and Merit of Christ, will never be applied to any particular one; but Conditionally, that they comply with the Terms that its offer'd on, that is, with the Duty of Faith, true Repentance, and future sincere Obedience.

**Calvin.** This seems a Plausible Scheme, but yet I am not satisfy'd with it.

**Ch-Man.** Why, what reasonable honest Heart, can find fault with this sort of Predestination, or Conditional Election to Heaven and Salvation? But the Absolute, Irrespective, Unconditional Decrees of such Persons to Heaven, and such Persons to Preterition, or to Hell, Nay, to the far greater Number to Hell, as if he had regarded Hell most; and all this on both sides, without any distinction of good or bad Facts, in either Party; and without any manner of Reason, why or wherefore, but Absolute Arbitrary Will and Pleasure; It were as good depend upon a Lottery, as

depend upon an Arbitrary Will, that regards neither Good nor Bad. But then, why was this Lottery so liberal to Hell, cou'd not Hell be content with an equal dividend? If it was not (as they say it was not) that the wicked Inclinations of Men themselves, carry'd more there; but they say, neither the Inclinations, nor future Actions of Men, was in any wise regarded, to this Discrimination of Persons; that were all taken out of the same Corrupt Mass, no Bit of it better than another. This then was equal to a pure Lottery, as much as Soldiers casting for their Lives upon a Drum Head. This dreadful Doctrine has (where it cou'd take) in a great measure ruin'd the Beauty of Christianity, and I wou'd not wonder, that all considering Christians shou'd be of my mind, that it was Originally, a thing of the Devil's first bringing in, a Tare of the Enemies Sowing.

**Calvin.** The Heathens have none of God's Grace given them. And they must have been Absolutely Predestinated to Damnation, without any Covenant, depending either on the Goodness or Badness of their Lives.

**Ch: Man.** How do you know that? And *what have we to do, to Judge them that are without,* says the Apostle, 1 Cor. 5. 12. We can speak, but of those that are under the Revelation of the Gospel, or those that Reject, and will not Receive it, when sufficiently Proposed to them: We cannot be sure, that all Nations have had it so Proposed yet; but this is Evident, that God has by some sufficient Measure of his Grace, freed the Wills even of those Infidels, so that they generally chuse Vertue, and avoid Vice, to the very shaming of many Christians, whom they out-do; none can tell, what God will do with them; 'tis not likely they'll be Judged by the Christian Law, nor by the Mosaic Law, but by the Law of Nature; which

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St. Paul seems to Intimate. *Rom. 2. 14.* speaking of those Gentiles that *have not the Law, and yet do by Nature the things contain'd in the Law.* What sort of future Condition God will discriminate the Good and Bad of them by, none can tell: We only know, whatever Mercy the best of them obtains, it must be on the Score of Christ's Satisfaction, and in his Name, tho' he was not Reveal'd to them; nor was he fully Reveal'd to all the good People, that were under the Patriarchal and Jewish Ages; who yet will not be denied their Portion in him, according to their Works. And who can be sure, that virtuous Heathens will be denied to have some measure, at least of the *Crumbs which fall from their Master's Table*; If they be such as never Resist-ed nor Disbelieved the Gospel, as never having had it sufficiently propos'd to them. All that we can determine, is, that God will Vindicate even his Mercy and Goodness, to them also, by ways not yet Revealed to us; and I am afraid, many of them will rise up in Judgment against some, of even these Rigid Predestinarian Believers.

**Calvin.** Pray how did this Predestination Doctrine, which you call Rigid, spread so, and get such Footing and Encrease in Christendom, if it was not true?

**Ch: Man.** The same way as Popery did, and it was from that same Fountain it Sprung. The *Augustine* and *Dominican* Fryars, were the first that drove it to the greatest height in the Days of *Thomas Aquinas*, their Angelical Doctor (as they call him) Grounded on some of St. *Augustine's* Writings, who was one of the latest Fathers, and departed (with great innovation in that point) from the Universal Doctrine of all the Greek Churches. But the Fryars train'd the Doctrine far beyond him. Yet a little after the beginning of the Reformation, the Church of *Rome*, by the *Jesuits* Help and Doctrines,

Doctrines, ran into a quite contrary Extream: For there are Extreams on each Hand of us, and even some of our selves, that are in the Orthodox Middle Way, do sometimes, by Mistake, Charge each other with the Extreams on both Sides, and so Clash without cause.

There are I say, Extreams on both Hands of us. Some on one Side, hold Man's Absolute Natural Free-Will so high, that they Attribute all to Man's Work, without any Grace, or need of Grace from God; That we Condemn. Then on the other Side, some utterly deny all sort of Freedom to Man, or his Will, in any wise, insomuch, that they Attribute all to Free Grace, without any Power, or Faculty in Man, to Co-operate or Work along with Grace; And this we Condemn also: And is the Scheme of the Rigid Predestinarians, I have been now Contuting: We keep the Middle Way, as Truth is always usually in the Middle, between two Extreams, and we hold the Free Grace of God, necessary first, in this Lapsed State, to make Man a Free Agent, and that God Offers, and gives this to all Men, and that then Man has a Free-Will, and shall be Rewarded, or Punished, according as he makes use of it, to good or bad Life.

So that we are neither for Arminianism, nor Gomarism, Papism, Calvinism, nor Zwinglianism, we love no *Isms*, (as our Primate *Framball* says) but one which we derive from *Antioch*, that is, Christianity. For indeed, as to our Christian Doctrine, we can be determined by no *Author*, of how great Credit soever, but by him, that is the *Author and Finisher of our Faith*, who is also, the Author of our Faculties and Understandings, which we know to be most contrary to the Novel Scheme, of harsh Predestinarian, Absolute, Irrespective, Unconditional Decrees, to Salvation, or Damnation;



on; the which, what Authors soever have Asserted, how far soever they seem'd removed from Popery, they little considered perhaps, that they were strengthening the Cause of Popery by it; for tho' the Fryars were the first Propagators and Supporters of it, till it was fix'd among Protestants; the Papiſts, ſince the Reformation began, never got ſo much Advantage againſt Proteſtants, by any other means, as by that Doctrine, which indeed put the greateſt ſtop to the Progreſs of the Reformation; both by the Diviſions of the Reform'd Churches, chiefly upon that Account, and alſo, by the Ingratefulneſs of that terrible Unreaſonable Doctrine, which multitudes of Honelt Reasonable Chriſtians, were Scandalized at, and forſook the Proteſtant Church for it, when that was laid home to them for a Proteſtant Doctrine. And to this Day, whenever the Papiſts Diſpute us, the firſt thing they fly at, is Free-Will, Solitary Faith, Election, or Predeſtination, and the Non-neceſſity of Good Works, which they ſay, Proteſtants expect to be Saved without; and perhaps, I may ſafely ſay, that if it were not, for this Doctrine, and all the Scheme and Links that depend on it, and all the evil Conſequences of it, and all the Schiſms, Diviſions, Hatreds, Brawls, Wars, and Immoralities of Life, it has produced, the Reformation had probably Overspread all Chriſtendom, e're now.

**Calvin.** Was the Church of *England* never, or at any time ſince the Reformation of this Rigid Doctrine.

**Ch: Man.** I do not find truly that ever it was: 'Tis not doubted, but that on the Popiſh Queen *Mary's* Banishing all our Divines, in the beginning of the Reformation, for Four or Five Years, into Foreign Countries, many of them brought home a Tincture of it with them, and our Thirty Nine Articles,

Articles, being immediately after that made in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's Reign. There was one Article carry'd, by Majority of Votes, viz. the Seventeenth Article, wherein the Phrases seem to sound somewhat that way, but it was so Cautiously Worded, that both the Parties of contrary Persuasions, might Subscribe the Article, for Peace sake: For we had Enemies enough then, of the Papists at Home, and needed not to Fall out among our Selves, the matter of Reprobation, is not touched at all in the Article, and the main Pinch of Predestination; where the Question chiefly lies, is not meddled with, that is, whether God's Eternal Purpose or Decree, of whom he would Elect, was made according to what he foresaw each Person would do, or only purely according to his absolute Arbitrary Will. And moreover, the two Cautions, at the end of the Article. First, That we must receive God's Promises, in such wise, as they are generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture. And Secondly, That in our doings, we must follow that Will of God, which we have expressly declared to us, in the Word of God. These do Restraine the Article, clearly from the Rigid Way. For First, If we must receive the Promises, as they are set forth in Scripture, The Scripture Promises, are all Conditional, and so therefore must the Decrees be Conditional; for Absolute Decrees, are a Contradiction to Conditional Promises. Secondly, If we must follow only the Reveal'd Will of God, as expressly declar'd in Scripture; Then we must not Imagine, that there is any Secret Will of God, that contrary to his Reveal'd Will, has positively Decreed, That we shall not do what his Reveal'd Will has Commanded us to do. This Intrusion into the pretended Secrets of God, is a great Presumption. Deut. 29. 29. *The Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are Reveal'd, belong*

distinguished us; and to our Children for ever; but we  
 may do little to the World by this Law. W. b. v. o. n. s. f. l. a. m.  
 Now as to the succeeding Times of our Church,  
 especially those Fifty or Sixty Years past, wherein  
 Ancient Learning, has been more generally Revi-  
 ved and Improved, there has been scarcely two  
 Writers of any Note, adding two Score of the  
 most Learned Writers of our Church, but have  
 clearly declared themselves against Calvin, Zuing-  
 lius, Gomarus, Ursinus, and the rest of that Society,  
 and have absolutely Rejected that Scheme. I shall  
 Name a few of them, as Dr. Bramhall, Dr. Ham-  
 mond, Dr. Peirce, Dr. Sanderson, Dr. Taylor, Dr.  
 Tillotson, Dr. Wallingford, Dr. Pearson, Dr. Ratcliffe,  
 Dr. Sherlock, Dr. Horneck, Dr. Lucas, Dr. Whistly,  
 and the most Excellent Author of the *Whole Duty*  
*of Man*, who may serve instead of a Hundred;  
 who in his *Cases of the Decay of Christian Piety*,  
 makes those sort of Principles one Cause. And if  
 these Authors have not the Sense of the Church of  
 England, I know not who has. *Quod non videtur.*

Calvin. Whatever your Authors say, I Profess  
 my self to be on the Church of England side.  
 And you can never make me a truer Protestant,  
 nor Church Man, than I am. *Quod non videtur.*

Ch. Man. I know the Calvinists always think  
 themselves the truest Protestants, and of the purest  
 Gospel Doctrine too, whatever Church they are  
 in. But it seems, the Question between you and  
 me now, Resolves it self only into this at last,  
*viz.* Whether the present Church of England, do  
 hold with Mr. Calvin, and you, in all that Scheme  
 of his Doctrine, which you have been maintain-  
 ing. Now, Pray whom will you be said by?  
 Will you be determined by the good Bishop of  
 this Diocese? But that I need not ask, you ha-  
 ving formerly Rejected such Arbitration in my  
 Letters, Proposed to you. How will you have

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it Tryed then, do any of the Church of England's most approved Writers in this Age, hold with you? Or can you find any one Bishop, or Dr. in Divinity, now Living, that ever Commenced in any of our Universities in England, or Ireland, that Holds with you, or that you dare Refer it to? Name your Man. Unless there be some one Doctor, so extravagantly Conceited, as to Oppose and Censure all the Living Doctors, as well as the Bishops of our Church. And yet such a one it self, I am Confident you'll never find, that Agrees with you in all your Principal Points, so as to deny Falling from Grace, Freedom of Will, and Liberty of Actions, which is my Chief Controversy with you. For I Oppose your Rigid Way of Absolute Unconditional Election to Heaven, (which you make your Sense of Predestination) only because you Build such Consequences on it, as no Falling from Grace, no Free-Will, or Liberty of Actions, or Contingency of Events. I gave you under my Hand, that I wou'd allow them, that will Affirmatively own these things, any sort of Predestination they pleased, that they cou'd think in their Consciences, did not Contradict these; and that they will Declare so to the World, that it is not to overthrow these things, they hold such Absolute Decrees, or Predestinations. And then let them make their best of them; we'll not Quarrel about them. I once more desire you, to Name your Man.

Calvin. I will Refer it to none, but the Articles of our Church; which is my Rule. Read the 10, 11, 12, 13, and 17th Articles, and that without any one's Glosses or Commentaries, and see whether my Doctrine be not made good there.

Th-Man. It it be then, I will yield to you. What is it the Tenth Article says for your Scheme?

Calvin.

Calvin. The Tenth Article is this, *Of Free-Will.*

The Condition of Man, after the Fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot Turn and Prepare himself by his own natural Strength, and good Works, to Faith, and Calling upon God: Wherefore we have no Power to do good Works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the Grace of God by Christ, preventing us, that we may have a good Will, and working with us when we have that good Will.

Ch-Man. Well, what does this make for you?

Calvin. That we have no Free-Will.

Ch-Man. Does it say one Word, that Christians have no Free-Will? It speaks only of the Condition of Man, after the Fall of Adam. And we own in that Lapsed State, the Freedom of Man's Will, to do good was lost, and his Will was Fetter'd, Enslaved, Prone, and Biased, to all Evil, naturally, according to his then Corrupt Nature. But we say, the Grace of God through Christ's Merit, Frees our Wills from that total Enslavement, by preventing that Corruption, from carrying our Wills Captive to the Law of Sin. And so puts us upon such terms of Strength, that we may avoid doing Evil, if we will. This the Article calls *Preventing Grace*, that we may have a good Will. And if we comply with this, to avoid Evil, then comes *Assisting Grace*; or as the Article calls it, *Co-operating Grace*, by that Phrase, *Working with us, when we have that good Will*. And sure, all Baptized Christians, have at least that first and smallest degree of Preventing Grace given them, through Christ's Mercy and Merits, that they may have a good Will, (as the Article calls it) but it cannot be good, unless freed from its Absolute and Invincible Enslavement to all Evil. That their Will may be so far freed, as to avoid gross Wick-



edness, if they please; this, if they chuse to do, when this Grace Moves and Enclines their Will to it, and takes off the Force and Raging Tyranny of their Natural Corruption, so that their Will may reject wicked Deeds, Then more Grace shall be given, Assisting or Co-operating Grace, to Assist their Wills in doing all good things. Here is all that can be gathered out of the Article. But how does this Inter, that we, and all Baptized Christians (to speak no further it self, for we Dispute Chiefly about Christians) have *no Free-Will now*; not by the Assistance of Baptismal Grace; and can Will no goodness, but must expect an Irresistable Grace, to Force us by the same Omnipotent Call, as it did *the World out of nothing, and will bring the Dead out of their Graves*, as you have Express'd it. Which Doctrine, we believe wou'd be most fatal to Christianity, if generally received. Your next Article is the Eleventh, Pray Read that.

Calvin. Thus it is. Article the Eleventh, Of the Justification of Man.

We are accounted Righteous before God, only for the Merits of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, by Faith, and not for our own Works or Deservings. Wherefore that we are Justify'd by Faith only, is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of Comfort, as more largely is Express'd in the Homily of Justification.

Ch Man. What does this make for you?

Calvin. That we are Justify'd without good Works.

Ch Man. There is not such a Word in it. The plainest meaning of *good Works* among us Christians, must signify good Christian Works, done through Faith, in Christ. And without these, none can ever be Justify'd, that had time to do them, and wou'd not do them. And even our Justification by Faith, Includes such Works, for it must

must be an Obedient Faith, a Working Faith, a Faith Working by Love, Gal. 5. 6. A Faith perfected by Works, James 1. 24. This only is the Faith, that we are Justify'd by. But our own Works and Deservings, is another thing: All that we do through Christ's Grace, is good, and the Merit of it, is only Christ's; but our Works, before we had Grace, or afterwards done, and rely'd on without Grace, are properly our own, and have no such Deservings, or Merits, as that we shou'd be Justify'd by them, in Opposition to Faith. Even the Heathens, thought their own Works were very Meritorious with God; The Jews, thought their Works of the Mosaick Law, wou'd Justify them before God. And the Papists did Teach, their own Works were Meritorious, both in Condition, and Congruity, contrary to all those; our Church Taught, that we are Justify'd only by Faith, in Christ, or by his Faith only; which yet does not Exclude Christian Works, tho' it Exclude the vanity of our own Deservings, or our own Invented Works, or our Works done without Faith, or any other way of Justification, but by the Faith of Christ, only. And indeed we deny, that we are Justify'd by Faith it self, join'd with the very Works of Christian Righteousness, in such a Sense, as that it shou'd be the Original Cause of our Justification; for that we say, is only the Death and Merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But we are Justify'd by Faith only (and that such a Faith, as has Christian Works included) as the sole Condition, upon which God will Graciously Accept us, through the Merits of Christ alone, unto a State of Justification, in his Sight. In short, we are Justify'd only by a Working Faith, in Christ, and that as the Condition, not the Cause of our Justification.

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Now, how does this Prove, that we are Justify'd without good Works, meaning Works of Christian Righteousness, done through Faith, in Christ. If that were true, we wou'd be Justify'd without Faith too: For that true Justifying Faith, can never be separated from good Christian Works, where there is any time to do them. You told us before indeed, that you held *with St. Paul, that good Works were inconsistent with the Grace of God.* But you cou'd not shew where St. Paul ever said that; for he spoke only of the Circumcision Moisaick Works. But you Clap'd just such Imaginary Senses on him, as you do on the Articles. And that you may not take that Word *only* in the wrong Sense, to Exclude good Christian Works, I desire you to Observe, that there is no one Text in all the Bible, uses that Phrase, that we are Justify'd by Faith only; tho' our Church says true, that we are Justify'd by Faith only, in the Sense I have told you: For *Faith only*, was the Modish Phrase then, against the Popish Doctrine of Merits. But as there is not one Text in all the Bible, uses that Phrase, that we are Justify'd by *Faith only*: So there is a very plain Text, that says most expressly the contrary, James 2. 24. *Ye see then, how that by Works a Man is Justify'd, and not by Faith only.* Pray now, let's see what your next Article says for you.

**Calvin.** Article the Twelfth, *Of good Works.*

' Albeit that good Works, which are the Fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our Sins, and endure the Severity of God's Judgment, yet are they Pleasing and Acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith, insomuch that by them, a lively Faith may be as evidently known, as a Tree discern'd by the Fruit.

Ch: Man.

• **Ch. Man.** What can you make of this for your Cause.

**Calvin.** Is it not clear by this, that good Works follow after Justification, therefore we were Justify'd before them, and consequently, without good Works.

**Ch. Man.** That is true, for the first Act of Justification. There are several Gradations, Steps, or Degrees, in our Justification, which Word Justification, is nothing else but the Pardon of our Sins, so as to make us for that time, accepted of God, through Christ. But another Pardon will be needful again, if we Fall again into Sin. Now on our first Entrance into the Church by Faith and Repentance, our Sins are washed away in Baptism; if we be Adult, or capable of Faith and Repentance. And even Infants, that are not capable of Faith Explicitly, yet they are either supposed to have it Implicitly, or else, that they will not be denyed the Grace of Pardon, or Baptismal Justification, only for, or because of their natural Incapacity, to Exercise Faith and Repentance; that surely shall not Condemn them, or Deprive them of God's Mercy, and Baptismal Grace, which is the Pardon of their Sins, and so Justification. To Explain this fully, we must Consider, that there is a lower or lesser Degree of Saving Faith, for Infidels, or those that never Profess'd Christianity before, upon their first coming over to the Gospel; there is no other Faith then required of them, to qualify them for Baptism, and consequently for Salvation, if they were to Dye that Instant, but only to Believe the Creed, to Believe in the Saviour of the World, in Christ Jesus, and Embrace his Gospel; and being Baptized in this Faith, it washes away all Sin, both Original, and Actual, from their Birth, to that time. *He that Believeth and is Baptized, shall be Saved,* says

says our Saviour. *Mark 16. 16. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Acts 16. 31.* And many other Places. But after this Baptismal Justification, which is indeed done before, or without good Works, such good Works must then follow our first Justification, as the only thing to prove our Faith true, and by which our Faith is as certainly known, as a Tree by its Fruit. Yet if we fall into a Sinful Life after, how many times soever God Pardons, or Justifies us again upon our Repentance, yet our Final Justification, will not be Ratify'd or Past on us, till the Conclusion of our Life, shew what Livers we have been; and for certain, we shall not be so Finally Justify'd without good Works; nor Justify'd at all in any Degree, after Laps into Sinful Life, without good Works, which is so Essential to Faith, in Christ, that there can be no true Faith without them. 'Tis the Opinion of our whole Church (and the very Words of one of our Bishops, and he a great Writer) that a greater Disparagement to the Christian Religion, cannot be Imagined, than to Propose the hopes of God's Mercy and Pardon, barely upon Believing, without good Life. Which is the same in other Words, for being Justify'd by Faith only, (when you add that Sentence to it) without good Works. Which God be Thanked is not in our Articles, tho' it be in your Scheme; which our Articles, with all your Wrestling, can never be drawn to Justify, whilst we speak of Baptized grown Christians, after Relapse into any Sin. And yet it's true, that our good Works then it self, nor our Faith neither, cannot put away our Sins, and endure the Severity of God's Judgment. 'Tis Christ's Merits only must do that, for without them, in God's sight shall no Man Living be Justify'd. *Psal. 143. 2.*

Now,



Now, what good has this Article done you? The next we have to speak of is the Thirteenth. Pray let us hear that.

**Calvin.** Article the Thirteenth, *Of Works before Justification.*

Works done before the Grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, inasmuch as they spring not of Faith, in Jesus Christ, neither do they make Men meet to Receive Grace, or (as the School Authors say) deserve Grace of Congruity: Yea, rather for that they are not done, as God hath Willed and Commanded them to be done, we doubt not, but they have the Nature of Sin.

**Ch. Man.** I Confess, I cannot Imagine what Argument you can make for your Cause out of this, as to any part of your Scheme.

**Calvin.** Why, do not you see how little Stress is laid upon good Works, and that they may be even displeasing to God, and may have the Nature of Sin.

**Ch. Man.** First, You wou'd put your old Falacy upon us, by calling them *good Works*, when the Article does not so. For we are not willing to call any Works good, but the Works of Christian Righteousness, done in the Faith of Christ. And them too, not Superstitious Works of our own Invention, as the Popish, Cutting their Knees about Wells, Chappels, and Promontaries, Endowing of Images, Slashing their Skins, Bare-foot Processions, Whimsical Abstinencies, Endowing of Monasteries, Burning with Lives, of Vowed Celibacies, Buying of Relicks, Enriching St. Peter's pretended Successors, Buying of Pardons, Dispensations, Bulls, and Masses for Purgatory, &c.

And Secondly, We Believe the best Moral Works, done not only by Infidels, without the

Faith of Christ; but also, by Protestant Christians, if they be done otherwise, than in pure Obedience to God's Command; or for any vain-Glorious, or Sinister Selfish Design, or other bad Ends. *They have the Nature of Sin, and are Displeasing to God.* And what of all this? Must we therefore undervalue the good Works of Christian Righteousness, done in the Faith of Christ, according to his Command, and deny them to be any Ingredients in the Condition of our Justification; so that we Poor Sinners Living in Christianity, may be Entirely and Finally Justify'd without them. This is Monstrous Doctrine, that wou'd leave but very little Grounds, to Enforce on us the necessity of a good Life, in Christian Works of Righteousness. But I suppose, your great Reserve is yet behind. The Seventeenth Article. Pray let us see it then.

**Calvin.** Article the Seventeenth, *Of Predestination and Election.*

‘ Predestination to Life, is the Everlasting Purpose of God, whereby (before the Foundations of the World were laid) he hath constantly Decreed by his Counsel, Secret to us, to Deliver from Curle and Damnation, those whom he hath Chosen in Christ, out of Mankind, and to bring them by Christ, to Everlasting Salvation, as Vessels made to Honour. Wherefore, they which be Endued with so Excellent a Benefit of God, be Call'd according to God's Purpose, by his Spirit, Working in due Season: They thro' Grace, Obey the Calling: They be Justify'd Freely: They be made Sons of God by Adoption: They be made like the Image of his only Begotten Son, *Jesus Christ*: They walk Religiously in good Works, and at length by God's Mercy, they attain to Everlasting Felicity.

‘ As the Godly Consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ, is full of Sweet,  
‘ Pleasant,

Pleasant, and Unspeakable Comfort, to Godly  
 Persons, and such as feel in themselves, the  
 Working of the Spirit of Christ, Mortifying  
 the Works of the Flesh, and their Earthly Mem-  
 bers, and drawing up their Mind to High and  
 Heavenly things, as well because it doth greatly  
 Establish and Confirm their Faith of Eternal  
 Salvation, to be Enjoyed through Christ, as be-  
 cause it doth fervently kindle their Love towards  
 God: So, for Curious and Carnal Persons, lack-  
 ing the Spirit of Christ, to have continually be-  
 fore their Eyes, the Sentence of God's Predesti-  
 nation, is a most dangerous Downfal, whereby  
 the Devil doth thrust them, either into Despara-  
 tion, or into Wretchedness of most unclean Li-  
 ving, no less Perilous than Desperation.

Furthermore, we must Receive God's Promi-  
 ses in such wise, as they be generally Set forth to  
 us in Holy Scripture: And in our doings, that  
 Will of God is to be follow'd, which we have  
 expressly Declared unto us, in the Word of  
 God.

**Ch. Man.** This I know, is your Chiefly Belo-  
 ved Article. It is undoubted, there was a great  
 number of Calvinists in the Church of *England*,  
 at the time of making the Thirty Nine Articles,  
 in the beginning of Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign, just  
 after the Popish Queen *Mary's* Persecution, when  
 many of our Younger Clergy, were driven to For-  
 eign Countries, and especially to *Geneva*, from  
 whence they came full of that *French* Minister's,  
*Mr. Calvin's* Doctrine, as his Institution had pos-  
 sessed both them, and many others, that never  
 were there, by Reading Diligently, and Dwelling  
 Constantly on them, as the only short Method  
 to Set up for Preaching. And they strove to car-  
 ry all to his Strain. But God be Thanked, there  
 was a Wise and Learn'd Party of our Prelates and  
 Doctors,

Doctors, that were too many for them, in Weight, if not in Number. The Ignorant sort, that generally knew little or nothing of Ancient Learning, were all for Calvin's Doctrine; and in the Lower House of Convocation, they were more Numerous than the others, and able to Out-Vote them. So that for the present to Unite us (for the Papists were too Formidable, then, for us, to Divide at Home) something must be allow'd these Men to satisfy their Clamorous Demands, which seems to be this, and the other Four Articles above mentioned, viz. the 10, 11, 12, 13. But as the Spirit of God, was undoubtedly the Conductor of the whole, so we had Peace, and the Subscription of all Parties, by the allowing of these Five, as they are: Yet it is admirable, how strangely the Providence of God order'd it, that tho' that Turbulent Party Acquiesced, and thought they had carry'd their Point, Yet there is not one Word in any of those Articles, that will prove any part of their Scheme. They have some Out-side Phrases, that seem'd to Comply with their then Fashionable Cant; and yet so wonderful Wisely Contrived, that they do not really make good any thing of their way, but the quite contrary, may be better Built on the Words, by literal Grammar, and by clear Consequences. Which, as I have shewn in the rest, I will shew in this also.

**Calvin.** What can you shew? Are not the Words plain? Will you deny the literal Sense? You must deny the whole Article then.

**Ch. Man.** No, we deny not a tittle of the Article, in its literal Verds. But where it is said, *God hath constantly Decreed by his Counsel, secret to us,* you wou'd have this to be a Decree, without foresight of any of their Faith or Works, we say it is a Decree made upon foresight of Faith and Obedience, in the respective Persons he so Decreed to Elect,

Elect, whose particular Lots show it will be to them, is indeed ~~known~~ <sup>known</sup> to us. For we know not certainly their past Life, much less the future Life of any one; what it will yet be. Those whom he hath Chosen in Christ, out of Mankind, you wou'd have to mean an Absolute, Peremptory, Arbitrary Election, without Regard to any Qualification, of Believing, or Living. We say, It is a Conditional Election, of those that will Believe in Christ, and obey him, by which, we shall become *as Vessels made to Honour*. Therefore, they who be *Endued with so Excellent a Benefit of God*, as to be Decreed, to be thus Conditionally Elected to Heaven, upon this foresight of their Faith and Obedience, *be Call'd according to his Purpose*, they have the Gospel sent to Call them, and his Grace, or Spirit, *works with them in due Season*, both Preventing, and Assisting Grace, given them by his Sacraments and Ordinances. They through Grace, obey the Calling, then follows, *they be Justify'd freely*, through God's free Mercy indeed, for Christ's Merits only, and by this very Method of the Article, we see Obedience goes before Justification, and that follows after, and so all the rest follows, Adoption, Sanctification, &c.

Calvin. But Mark the rest of the Article.

Ch. Man. I will so, you shall see I'll go thro' it. Now, *as the Godly Consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ, is full of sweet Comfort*, &c. That which is the most Godly Consideration of it, is the considering it in such a manner, as most tends to Establish the Necessity of a Godly Life. As the *Doctrine which is according to Godliness*, is that which most Necessitates a Godly Life. And it's certain, the Conditional Election most Necessitates that. But says the Article, as this Godly way of Considering, it brings Comfort, *so for Curious and Carnal Persons*, &c. That Consider  
it



it otherwise; that is, have *continually before their Eyes*, a Fatal or Unconditional Sentence of God's Predestination. 'Tis a most dangerous Downfall, &c. If the Article meant, that they were on the Preterition Side, and none of the Absolutely Elected, how cou'd any thing be more dangerous to them, than the Case they were in already? Cou'd any have a lower Downfall? But they are Reproached for their being *Curious*, as Prying into the Arcanum of God's Absolute Arbitrary Decrees. Conditional Decrees are Plain and Easy, and will never put People into such Downfalls, as Despair, or Presumption, but such Curiosity of Absolute Decrees, may make some *Carnal*, and *lack the Spirit of Christ*, and so *the Devil may have Power to thrust them into Despair*, or Presumption. Surely the Article never intended to mean, that the right Consideration cou'd do Mischief to any. The First Godly Conditional Consideration of Election, was therefore right, and full of Comfort: But the *Curious* deep Consideration of God's Arbitrary Absolute Sentence of Predestination, made People Carnal, void of the Spirit of Christ, and was most dangerous, leading to Despair on the one Hand, or Presumption on the other.

This certainly must be the meaning, or else this last part of the Article, cannot have a Charitable Meaning. For if *Curious and Carnal Persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ*, come to a right or true Consideration of any Gospel-Truth, it will rather do them Good, than Hurt, else, why shou'd the Gospel be Preached at all to Wicked People? Surely, that is the best Doctrine, which brings Wicked People to Goodness. *I came not to Call the Righteous* (says our Saviour) *but Sinners to Repentance*. Now, if the Calvinists way, were the Sense of this Article, it must then be, that Absolute Arbitrary Election to Heaven, must be an Extraordinary.

nary, Good, and Precious Doctrine, because it greatly Comforts them, that are already Godly, and Righteous Livers; but them, that are yet Evil Livers, it will never Contribute to make them better, but worse. And thrust them into dangerous Despair, or Presumption. And then it wou'd be a sweet Article indeed.

Upon the whole, we see that the Article does not clearly Decide the Controversy at all, where the Strefs of it lies (which you force me to Repeat again) the Matter of Reprobation, is not touched in the Article, much less with your distinction of Conditional Preterition; only Predestination in general, and that we allow. But the Main Question, lies Undetermined there, that is, whether God's Eternal Purpose or Decree, of whom he wou'd Elect, was made according to what he foresaw each Person wou'd do; or else purely by his own Absolute Arbitrary Will, without Regard to our farther Obedience. But the end of the Article, clearly Restrains it to our Sense, by saying, *That we must receive God's Promises in such wise, as they be generally set forth to us, in Holy Scripture.* Now, all the Scripture Promises of Heaven, are Conditional, and so therefore, must our Election to Heaven be. For Conditional Promises of Heaven, and Absolute Unconditional Election to Heaven, are as contrary to each other, as any thing can be.

Calvin. Whatever the Article says, This Doctrine is as Old as the Reformation. And Calvin follow'd St. *Augustin* in it.

Ch-Man. I own'd already, St. *Augustin* first Broached it, in Opposition to all his Elder Fathers. But it was not much follow'd, till Popery first drove it on the World, that the Pope and his Party, might be thought the Absolute Elect of God, and all that Opposed them, Absolute Reprobates,

bates; all Damnd. And because the World saw  
 the general wicked Lives of their Priests, Fryers,  
 Cardinals, and Popes; we must be Persuaded  
 God made no Conditional Election upon Lives,  
 but all Absolute, Arbitrary, and Unconditional.  
 And accordingly they set, their great Angelical  
 Doctor and Saint, as they Call him, that was (and  
 is so accounted to this Day) their Chief School-  
 Man, and only Saint among their School Men; *St.*  
*Thomas Aquinas*; to Establish and Defend this Do-  
 ctine Four Hundred and Fifty Years ago; he was  
 next to *St. Dominie* himself, the greatest Person of  
 the Dominican Fryers; and they follow his Do-  
 ctine entirely to this Day, and are as Zealous for  
 it, as any Calvinist's: Tho' the Jesuits, and other  
 Fryers, now-a-Days, Oppose them, purposely to  
 Baffle the Calvinist's; which they can Effectually  
 do. This Angelical *St. Thomas Aquinas*, Lived in  
 the Days of Pope Urban the Fourth; in the Year  
 of our Lord 1263. He in his Books, maintains  
 with the greatest Eagerness, the Rigid Calvinisti-  
 cal Scheme of Absolute Predestination, and Re-  
 probation too, in Eight several Articles, distinctly  
 Treated of at large. Where he holds also, the  
 Absoluteness so high, that the Præscience, even of  
 Merits, or good Works, are not so much as a  
 Conditional Cause of Predestination, or Election.  
 (*Sunt. Divi Tho. Aquin. par. 1. Quest. 23.*) And  
 Cardinal *Cajetan*, maintains the same at large, in  
 his Commentaries on *Aquinas*, and much more  
 Amply Confirms it. So that we see, from what  
 Popish Fountain, we have our precious Calvi-  
 nism. And yet, they have the Ignorance or  
 Blindness, not to know their own Fathers, and  
 the Face, to call our contrary Doctrine, Popery.  
*Et Calvin*, on his Conversion, had so much of  
 the Fryar left in him, that he thought fit to Tran-  
 splant that Branch of *St. Thomas Aquinas* his Do-  
 ctine,

Strine, into the Reform'd Churches ; it were no wonder then, if it had got a much greater Stroak in *England* than it had, considering how many Disciples *Calvin* had among us then.

But I will make one Supposition, That is, Suppose the Church of *England*, under the Difficulties then upon Her, in the Infancy of the Reformation, had been Over-born by the Numerous Votes of Her Ignoranter Calvinistical Clergy, so as to been forced to pass that Seventeenth Article (as yet She did not) in the way they wou'd have it. And now, that the Calvinist Party, is in a manner quite Extinct in our Church, since Ancient Learning has Encreased: Wou'd it be, now, Reasonable; for any Ignorant Conceited Clergy-Man, here and there, or any Obstinate Calvinist, how Learn'd soever, to Preach up *Calvin's* Foreign Scheme again in our Churches, in spite of all our present Bishops and Doctors, Declaring against it, in all their Publick Writings; and Printed Books, Recommended by our Living Church to them, She Ordains and Entrusts ? And then pretend, they have the Church of *England* on their Side, by that one Extorted Article. Are not the Bishops, Doctors, and Church Rulers, now Living, the only Church of *England*, now to be found ? Shou'd not She be allow'd to Explain Her own Sense, of Her own Articles, to Her own Subjects ? And more especially so, when She has a Latitude in the Words of any Article, which perhaps, was so Worded at first, with such general Comprehensive Phrases, purposely not to Exclude other National Churches from Her Communion ; so that with them, She may not think fit to take the trouble of Disputing. But must She not have Peace at Home, with Her own Members, must She not Instruct Her own Young Ministers, how they shou'd Preach, and Teach, in Harmony with Her own

Sentiments? This surely is the just Right of our present Living Church of *England*: For there is no other Church of *England* in the World, but the present One now Living. And if we think She has not departed from the Faith, or from the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, we are Bound to Obey Her. If we think She has, we shou'd leave Her, and go to *Genova*, or some other of the Calvinist Churches; if we cannot with a safe Conscience, Teach as She Teaches. Shou'd there be Eternal Clashes in the same Pulpits, one Minister against another? And shou'd those Dissenters (especially in Places where they grow Numerous) that stick to *Calvin's* Doctrine, as well as Discipline, be Encouraged by the Parish-Minister, Teaching Zealously the same Doctrine, against all the Bishop's Doctrine, in their own Churches; which may Furnish the Dissenters with a very strong Argument, that they do no worse, than some of our own Ministers do; for certainly a Schism in Discipline, can be no Sin, if a Schism in Doctrine be none, by the Pulpit Teachers, in direct Terms, upon so many high Points, Diametrically Opposite to each other, in the same Pulpits. Is not this directly Contrary to the Scripture Rules, that we shou'd all speak the same thing. That there may be no Contention among our own Ministers. But that we be all of one Mind. With one Mind, and one Mouth, to Glorify God. 1 Cor. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phillipi. 2. 2. Rom. 15. 6. And that we shou'd keep the Unity of the Spirit, in the Bond of Peace. And surely, our Church Rulers, or Bishops, are under Christ, the Heads of that Unity, in their own Churches: 'Tis them, therefore we shou'd Obey, and their Sense of any of our dubious Articles, we shou'd follow.

*Calvin*. Well, well, You may Expound the Articles which way you will, we Believe we have our Sense in them still.

*Ch-Man.*



**Ch-Man.** Truly, if you were now a Member of one of the Calvinist Churches beyond Sea, we wou'd not think it worth our while, to trouble our selves about the matter with you. But yet we shou'd have Peace at Home, among our own Members. And if any Differences happen among ourselves, about the Sense of Articles, that were Worded with some Latitude of Phrales, perhaps purposely, not to Exclude Foreign Churches from our Communion: Yet our Church shou'd be allowed (as I said before) to Explain Her own Sense of Her own Articles; to Her own Children. And if you be now a true Son of the present Church of *England*, you shou'd Submit to Her Living Prelates, and Doctors, as to what you shou'd Teach Her Flock, if ever She intends to make you a Teacher in it.

**Calvin.** I have enough now on this Point, and do think, I shall never Dispute more about this Subject.

**Ch-Man.** You told me so before, and yet you fell on again. Are you fully satisfy'd yet?

**Calvin.** I will not own, that I am fully satisfy'd yet.

**Ch-Man.** And why will you not own it? Unless you can say, more than you'll let us know, and have some Concealed Arguments in your Mind yet, that you think Unanswerable; if you have, pray bring them out to the Light, and then perhaps, you'll find them Vanish, with the rest that are already fled. And perhaps, the Answers already given, will Solve all you have more, to bring.

**Calvin.** Sure you wou'd allow me, to have more Regard to my Credit, than to own my self Baffled by you.

**Ch-Man.** Baffled, no my good Friend, that's an Invidious Word; we are talking as *Christians* now,

now, not as *Hectors*. It is not to me you shou'd yield, but to the Church of *England*: 'Tis Her Exposition of Scriptures, by all Her Living Prelates, and Doctors, and not mine, shou'd sink with you. No Body can wonder, that you have not hitherto been so well acquainted with Her Writers, as I have. But you may yet be as well, if you please, or perhaps better acquainted with them, than I am now, before you come to my Age: And I do protest, cou'd I find the way my Education has Bred me to, come short of yours, in truth; I wou'd count it the greatest Credit, to own my Conviction by you, and I think, there is nothing cou'd be more Reproachful to me, than that I shou'd be Obstinate against Reason. And I wou'd be Joyful, if even from a School-Boy, I cou'd learn any Truth, against any Error I have been Misled to. And wou'd Bless Providence, if by any means, I cou'd learn any thing that is true, which I had not Observed before. And that indeed, the Wisest Man may sometime light on, from the meaneest Hand.

**Calvin.** Nay, Sir, I will not put Laurels on your Head, to Encrease your Glory, by making a Proselite of me, as you do with the poor Romans, and can do when you please; which I assure you, is Absolutely Impossible to do with me; if you want a Proselite from Calvinism, to add to the Glory you think you got by the poor Romans, you are utterly mistaken, in thinking ever to make me your Proselite.

**Ch. Man.** By this, you will of Consequence Represent your self, to be of a different Church, from the Church of *England*, as your poor Romans are: To be Proselytes, is to be Changed from one Church to another: I do but desire you, to stick to the Church you are in, and to follow her Doctrine only, and not Foreign Schemes. If  
thole

those that Communicate with the Church of *Rome*, whilst they resolve to continue in it, shou'd follow contrary Doctrine to it, they wou'd seem Hipocrites, and Opposers of their own Church Pastors, and Doctors. And if any of their Clergy, shou'd persuade them not to do so; wou'd that be Proselitizing them?

If you have set up Laurels and Glory, for the Prize of this Contest, I assure you, I will never Rival you, in the Pursuit of such Toys. But it seems, the poor Romans trouble you much, they that come to Church of them; but the rest never trouble you, because you never trouble them: And indeed if you did, they that have any Learning of 'em, wou'd be hard enough for you, upon *Calvin's* Bottom: Therefore, perhaps it's your wisest way to let them alone, and I declare, so wou'd I, rather than be obliged to maintain *Calvin's* Scheme against them: And in that, because you do let them alone, you please them very well. And you Complement them highly too, and Favour their Cause, by giving them, in this Kingdom, the Title of Romans, which they love to Usurp, that they might seem to be those *St. Paul* Wrote his Epistle to. The Church of *England*-Men call them Papists, or *Roman Catholics* (that Confused Name of Particular Universal, they at first took on them) or at best, *Romanists*, which Expresses the Factionousness of their Sect. But they love the Title of Romans best of all, and you please them to a Hair, both in your Stile, and in your Reflecting on those that come to Church from them.

Yet I pray, what Odium is this you wou'd cast on me, that I can Proselite poor Romans when I please?

*Calvin.* I am given to Believe, you Buy them with your Money; and they must be very wicked People

People, that will Sell their Religion. And I hate that way of Buying them, because 'Tis the Popish way to Buy (as they did in France) Protestants out of their Religion.

**Ch. Man.** 'Tis a Sin to Buy them over to Wickedness, but not to Goodness. We Read in Scripture, of those that *Sold themselves to do wickedness*, but if they had Sold themselves to do Goodness, surely that wou'd not be Reproachful. The Wicked-er they are, the more we shou'd endeavour to bring them out of that Wicked Religion. *I came not to Call the Righteous, (says our Saviour) but Sinners to Repentance,* 'Tis those we shou'd most Labour with, in any Honest way : As *St. Paul* says, to become *all things to all Men, that I might by all means save some.* 1 Cor. 9. 22. And how know we, but the wickedest of People, when they are for some time in our Church, may Learn to be good, by coming to the Knowledge of the Truth. For we cannot expect them all to be good, the first Day they come : All our own Protestants are not so ; but take up time to be brought to that, by degrees. Your Calvinist Doctrine, of *Conversion being wrought in an Instant*, is false. God can indeed work such a Miracle, as he did with the Thief on the Cross ; but that does not prove, that all Conversions are ordinarily so wrought ; but by *coming to the Knowledge of the Truth.* Of which Truth, Conviction is generally gain'd by Learning, more and more, and that is done by degrees.

And tho' Worldly Advantage Proposed, may move some to Examine the Truth ; yet all of that sort I offer'd, was that general one, of coming under the Favour of the best Government in the World, by joining with their own Lawfully Established Church, the same with the Primitive one : And so getting the Love, Help, and Respect, of all the best Subjects of the said Government, according

cording to their Qualification, for any Employ, or Favour, and among those that wou'd be kind to such, I reckon'd you. If I was in a mistake in that, it was a Charitable one. Yet truly, I found nothing but Reason, and Love of Goodness, prevailed on those, God made me Instrumental in Converting, and if some very few of them, were poor Labourers, that were in a starving Condition, by the Malice of the Party they left, wou'd you not allow me, if I had Charity Money to bestow, to give it to such, that will be good Subjects of the Household of Faith, rather than to such as will not, but stick to the Rebellious Faction, and wait only for an Opportunity to Cut our Throats; as they have always done to our Forefathers.

**Calvin.** Is it not Odious, to Buy Consciences with Money, as they say you do.

**Ch. Man.** That is the false Cry of the Exasperated Popish Priests, at any Man, that takes Pains in Obedience to the Injunction of our Church, that all Clergy-Men shou'd be diligent in Converting with Popish Recusants, and Instructing them, thereby to endeavour Reconciling them to the Established Church: And if they have any Success that way, then it must be Noised, they did it only with their Purse.

But tho' that is False, as to any little Success God has given me, yet you may go on with it, and suppose it were true; what can you make of it? Where lies the wickedness of it? Both Church and State, allows the Rewarding any that will be good Subjects to both. I will own, that if I were able to do it, I wou'd Buy all the Papists in the World off. And I Believe, you wou'd be hard put to it, to find a better way to bestow our superfluous Money, I am sure, Buying of the Poms and Vanities of this World, is not better.

And



And if the greatest Hipocrite, comes to Church for nothing but love of Money, and Lives and Dies in his Hipocrisie, with us ; yet it is probable; his Children getting thereby the Advantage of Education in our Church, some, if not all of them, may be other sort of Christians, and prove true, both to our Church and State. And who knows, how many of such Posterity to future Ages, may Spring from one Man ? will you venture to Reproach the Wisdom of our Bishops, and Lords, and Commons, in Parliament, who have Order'd Thirty Pound a Year, to every Popish Priest that Converts to our Church. Is this Buying of Consciences ? For shame, leave the venting of such Stuff, to the Bigotted Papists, that have no better Arguments, to Plead in Defence of their Baffled Cause. Will you Side with them in such Reproaches, against those that come from them to Church, as well as against those that endeavour to Convert them.

Calvin. I find you have Malice at me, you Represent my Doctrine so Odious, and Pernicious. Suppose a Christian Brother were in an Error, shou'd any good Christian publish that ?

Ch: Don. No truly, if it were only about a Private Matter, that did not concern the Publick Doctrine of the Church : But when Souls are in danger to be Perverted, the Church Doctrine Abused, the Episcopal Pastors Affronted ; and that Christian Brother will persist in the same Scheme, and Justify it, and will Endeavour Publishing Openly, and by Writing Pamphlets, his Doctrine, and what, and with whom, he Disputes, is t'other bound in Charity to Smother and Conceal the Matter then ? You say, I represent your Doctrine Odious and Pernicious : I shou'd be sorry, you wou'd call any Doctrine yours, which may justly fall under such Characters. But as to Malice, I gave it lately under my Hand, with a Protestation, in

In a Letter to one of your Friends, with Intent he might shew you it (which I suppose he did) that I am as ready to Love and Embrace you still, as ever I was towards you, or any one in my Life, if the Church of England Doctrine were Submitted to by you, or it ought by every True Son of the Church.

**Calvin.** Sir, I will not receive Laws from them that have no Power to Rule.

**Ch. Man.** Those are indeed the words of one of your last Letters about our difference. 'Tis certain I have no Power to Rule. And I pray have a Care you be not Ruled by a Power, that shoud have as little Right to Govern you, as I. — That is, the Power of *Obstinacy*; which is a great Tyrant where it Sways; and is Absolute, Arbitrary, and Unconditional, as any thing you woud have so. 'Tis Independent on the Empire of Reason, nor can all the Arms of Logick, or Arguments, reach it.

**Calvin.** I know you will never give over, till I do to first; and therefore I have done.

**Ch. Man.** Why did you begin first then? Woud nothing serve you but to Begin and End too, in so precious a Cause, as overthrowing the Church of England Doctrine?

**Calvin.** No, but they say it is the Second Man's returning a blow, makes the Battle, Especially when the first Man hit him by Chance, not intending his hurt.

**Ch. Man.** Well, upon this Supposition, I pray, before you give over, let us try the merit of this Point between you and me, which of us it was, that first Publickly Opposed the Doctrine which he knew the other Publickly Professed.

You know I was Nine Year ago but little Acquainted with you. Tho' I had just so much Superficial Knowledge of your Civil Department

Outwardly, as obliged me, like a Christian, to Love and Value you : And finding you a profess'd Son of the Church Established, as I saw too, it was your Interest to be, I never Imagined that you wou'd hold any Doctrine opposite to hers ; and I happening then to Answer a Profane Book of Mr. *Asgill's*, (which at that time made a great Noise among his Fellow-Debauchees) I was torted to take Notice of one Principle, among the rest, which he set up to Maintain his Wicked Life by. That was, his being Absolutely Predestinated to Heaven, notwithstanding any Badness of Life ; his Believing this, he calls, True Faith. And says these words, *so little doth God Esteem the work of a Man, in order to his own Salvation.* And again, *Christ had no Credit given him for his Personal Holiness on the day of his Death.* And again, *God never objects a Man's own Personal Sin to him on the day of his Faith.* And still I am more Sinful than Christ was Holy, my Sins are no Objection against my Faith. And because in him is all my Hope, I dare not almost what I am myself. This you may see in the Twenty Fourth Page of my Answer, where I have Quoted the Pages of his Book. This when he comes to Establish upon the Calvinist Principles, by that sort of Absolute Predestination to Heaven, he produces those two Texts, you so much build upon, viz. *Your Names are written in the Book of Life ; And as many as were ordain'd to Eternal Life Believed.* This I spent about two Pages in Answering, beginning at the bottom of Page Twenty Eighth. And declared, that this long since Baffled Cause had been deservedly Exploded with the Abhorrence of all Learn'd, Honest, and Rational People. All this, one wou'd think, shou'd have Obliged you, if you were a Friend of mine, as you pretended, to have Expostulated about this Matter in a Friendly way with me, if your Judgment

ment differ'd from what I had Publickly Printed when you had one of my Answers, and they were common all about you. But without giving me the least Suspicion, or hint of your Dissent, you made it your business in many Discourses, as publickly as you cou'd, to Condemn that Doctrine I had Printed, and brought those same Texts of Mr. *Algill's* Quoting, for Confirming your Opinion, in the same Cause, without taking the least Notice of my Answers, there, given to the same Scripture Texts. And so you were undermining me unknown to me.

**Calvin.** I had not you, nor your Book, in my thoughts, when I spoke on that Subject.

**Ch:man.** I leave it to the World to Judge, how that cou'd be. When I was told on many Hands, for Seven Years together, that you were often at that Doctrine Publickly. Yet my fault was, that I forbore so long Taxing you with it, as being loath to wrangle with you, perceiving the warmth of your Temper; and in Charity, I thought you were more Moderate, than I since found you, in that way; and I hoped, that a little time, and Conversing with our Authors, wou'd set you right. At last, about two years ago, you fell on it so eagerly; that some of the best that heard you, desired about a Month after, my Sense of what the Church of *England* Doctrine was in that Point; which because I gave, and Quoted Twelve or Thirteen of the very best of the Church of *England* Authors, without Touching at you, more than you had done at me, You fell foul upon me for it; and so we have continued these two Years in Contest about it. Tho' you dropp'd it once, when you refused Ending it, either by Private Letters; or by Reference, and left my last and largest Letter Unanswer'd; but satisfied me with your Promise, Four times repeated to me in your

Letters, and once with a Protestation, that you wou'd Write nor Dispute no more about that Controversy : Yet half a Year alter, you fell on again ; by Writing and Dispersing several Pamphlets in the same Cause, unknown to me ; till I saw them by chance.

**Calvin.** It was, because I saw your Sermon with a Postscript.

**Ch. Man.** You heard it also Preached, before our Contest, and I was under no Obligation, not to let it be seen, but why did you, after your Promise, Write your *More particular Account*, &c. And then refuse to Read my Answer to it, in Behalf of our Church, when sent to you : And yet continue your Opposition to our Church Doctrine. Now where the Obstinacy lies, and who was the first Aggressor, both against Friendship, and against the Churches Peace, I appeal to any Christian.

**Calvin.** I am quite weary of this tedious Dispute ; for I can be better Employ'd, than in Answering all you'll say.

**Ch. Man.** You told me so in your Letters, and you give a very good Reason indeed, which I believe is extraordinary true : For it is better be Employ'd in any Honest way, than in Answering things you cannot Answer. And if you be scarce of time, why did you all along make Repetitions of so many of your Arguments and Objections, which I had Answer'd before ; and forced me to repeat my Replies, by your taking no Notice of them ; which makes me suppose, you cou'd not Answer them.

**Calvin.** Perhaps, that's more than you know, but that I can Answer every Sentence of yours, to the satisfaction of any Impartial and Judicious Persons.

**Ch. Man.**



• **Ch Man.** You told me that too, in one of your Letters, that you had done so already, with a long Letter of mine, you were then Replying to, altho' you did not Satisfactorily Answer one Line of it, where the Pinch lay; and most of it you slipt by, and never touched. And I Appeal'd then to one Impartial Judicious Person, of great Piety, and good Learning, to Judge of the Matter, between us, Privately where you pleased, or I desired you, if you did not like him, to Name another; but you rejected all Reference; and when he spoke to you of it, you wou'd not hear a Word about it, on any Account.

**Calvin.** I see one Word draws in another. And I'll say no more; but that tho' I have resolved to Dispute no longer at present, yet I have not barr'd my self, from Considering more upon the Matter. And so Fare you well.

**Ch Man.** And you likewise. Adieu Good Sir.

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# POSTSCRIPT.

**T**HIS is added here for the sake of the more Ingenious, that desire to look more closely into the matter. And to clear some Objections I have met with. As First, That those Scriptures which sound for the Absolute Decree, seem to be too much wrested by me out of their Natural Appearance, and that my Explications puts, as it were, a forced Meaning on them. To this I Answer, that I think it the most Natural Meaning, and that I have not only followed my own Reason therein, but also the best Interpreters of the Antients, Especially *St. Chrysostom*: And also of our own Learned, Modern Writers; And particularly *Dr. Hammond*, and others. Nor do I know any Commentators hitherto that hold the freedom of our Will, or Liberty of our Actions, but do Expound those Scriptures the same way. And I fear it would put a greater Force or Difficulty upon our Understanding, do do otherwise. And I think it fit that we shou'd give such Reasonable Senses of those Scriptures, as the Contexts will afford, to make them agree with other plain Scriptures, and that we should shew the Ill Consequences of such Conclusions, as the Objectors of them would infer by them.

But after all, suppose we let it pass, That those, or the like, Scriptures were as full as cou'd be desired for Absolute Irrespective Decrees. Yet, First, They must relate only to those Attributes  
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of God that respect his Power, and his Absolute  
 Sovereignty. For suppose his Unaccountableness  
 to any, how he pleases to deal with his own Crea-  
 tures, to be such, that he may do all that, if he  
 will, without any Impeachment to his Justice:  
 Yet considering the other Attributes of his Mercy,  
 and Goodness, and Veracity, in his Declarations,  
 how kindly he will deal with Mankind; And  
 that his Mercy is over all his Works; this must  
 hinder us from believing that he Actually will  
 do any thing of that Arbitrary Usage of us, if he  
 might do it to his Creatures, strictly speaking,  
 without any Injustice. So that such Phrases, as  
 God's Absolutely Electing whom he will (it taken  
 to extend to Salvation and Damnation) and  
 Hardening, or Rejecting, whom he will, must  
 mean only that he can, if he pleased, Elect, or  
 Reject, Arbitrarily, and Absolutely, whom he  
 will, without our Impeaching, or Challenging  
 his Justice in it. But it cannot mean that he  
 Actually does so, without any Limitation or Con-  
 dition, with all Mankind, whom he has Redeem'd  
 in his Son, and made a Covenant of Mercy with.  
 So that it is one thing what God can do, and  
 another thing what he will do. Therefore where  
 he is Represented to us as doing so, and so, Ar-  
 bitrarily; 'tis to Represent his Power, and Abso-  
 lute Dominion over his Creatures, that none can  
 say unto him, what dost thou? Nay, but O Man,  
*who art thou that Replyest against God?* Shou'd the  
 Clay Reprove the Potter? But then the other  
 more plain, and more Numerous Representations  
 to us of God's Merciful Conditional Dealings  
 with us, and his great Goodness in the easiness  
 and Kindness of the Conditions, only such as  
 were Eligible to our own Nature, and tend all to  
 do our selves good in this very Life. These Re-  
 presentations, I say, of his Goodness, his Mercy,

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his Injunctions, his Entreaties, his Promising Rewards, his Threatning Punishments, his bidding of us chuse Life : Do Evidently shew that God Actually deals with us as with Free Agents, that his Mercy is extended to the Obedient or Penitent, and his wrath only to the Obstinately Disobedient, and Impenitent:

Secondly, Where God is said to foreknow who shall be Saved, and who not ; and from thence Inferences are made, that God's foreknowledge being certain, the Event must be certain too. So that all is fixt, and no Endeavours can alter the Fatal Lot ; but all things must necessarily happen according as they were foreseen. I Answer, we own God foresees all things ; but the whole Difficulty of this Argument lies in the Ambiguity, or Equivocation of the word *certain*. To infer, that because a thing is certainly foreseen, it must certainly happen, has a falacy in it : For the word *certain* has not the same meaning in both Propositions, or Sentences, a thing may be *certain* in one Respect, and yet not *certain*, but Contingent in another Respect. It may be certain in Respect of God's foreknowledge, which is always certain, and yet it may be contingent in Respect of the Event it self, and Nature of the Action. For when a thing is as purely Contingent, and Fortuitous as we can imagine it, without any Determining Cause, but mere Chance, or Accident, or Free Pleasure ; yet God can foresee that, as well as what has it's Most Necessary Efficient Cause. And God's knowledge is certain in both Cases, with Respect to his own Omniscience and Foresight ; but that, without altering the Natures of the Events themselves, or destroying the difference between the Contingent, and the Necessary Event, so that what does but merely Contingently happen, may yet certainly be foreseen by God's Omniscient Knowledge,

Knowledge, which we cannot confine to our Rules of Logic: And therefore we must lay it down for a certain Maxim, that God's Omniscient sort of knowledge, which we cannot fully comprehend, does not alter the Nature of Free Actions, nor destroy the difference between Contingent and Necessary Events. So that it is a False Inference to conclude, that because God's Knowledge of an Event is certain, that therefore the Event it self must, in it's own Nature, be certain too, and changed from Contingent to Necessary, even before it be done, or brought into Act: and all Liberty taken away; as if all were Decreed in the Records of Heaven, even the smallest Actions; For God's Knowledge, extends to them as well as to the greater. Let us Remember no Argument can possibly be good that's against any one of these three things. First, Against Revelation, or Secondly, Against Reason, or Thirdly, Against our Senses and Experience. Now the Arguments against the Trinity, or the Incarnation, are against the first of these, against Revelation; for they are flatly and plainly Revealed. And I grant it would Question the Truth of that Revelation, if those things Reveald were Contradictory to all our Reason and Senses: But the Trinity and Incarnation are not so; but rather Confirm'd by both so far as our Reason and Senses are capable to discern about things that are not their proper Objects, but are to be consider'd only by Analogous Comparison with other things. We Evidently perceive in many Cases three Essentially distinct things in one Nature, as the Will, the Memory, and the Understanding in one Man. The Light, the Heat, and the Round Shape, in One Sun, And Length, Breadth, and Depth, in One Body. Which shows a Trinity in Unity, not to be Contradictory to Reason, or Sense. Now is the Incarnation



Incarnation of the Son of God so Contradictory for both the Reason and Senses of Mankind perceived and saw plainly the Omnipotent Divine Power dwelling in the Body of Christ, who Attested himself the Son of God, as did the Visible Descent of the Holy Ghost at his Baptism, and the Voice from Heaven too ; tho' we cannot fully understand the *Modus*, or manner of that Mysterious Union : Neither can we see the way of the Common Union of Human Souls with Human Bodies. This therefore is no Contradiction to Reason, nor Senses and Experience, much less to Revelation. But the Argument from Prescience against Free-Will, does as well as Transubstantiation Contradict all these three things together ; tho' one of them wou'd be enough to make it false.

The Arguments against Free-Will, and those that are brought for Transubstantiation, are indeed Brethren-Arguments of the same kind, all alike grounded on Difficult, and Misconstrued Texts of Scripture, contrary to all the plain Texts of it. And as the Papists, to justify their Nonsense, about Transubstantiation, wou'd fain make the Trinity and Incarnation Nonsense too. And make Christianity an Unintelligible Depth ; So the Adversaries of Free-Will, the Fatalists, do confess their Scheme to be out of all Rules of Reason, and often Cry, *O the Depth*, thereby to make Christianity an Unintelligible Labrinth : But their Arguments against Free-Will, like those for Transubstantiation, is. — First, Against Revelation, tho' it pretends to it from some difficult places of Scripture ; But it is against all the plain places, that say we shall be Rewarded According to our own Works, and against all those plain places that make our Election to Heaven always Conditional, and not Absolute. And Secondly, 'Tis against Reason too, that we shou'd

be thrown into Heaven, like Stocks and Stones, Arbitrarily, without regard to our Works or Life. And Thirdly, Which is worst of all, and is Equivalent to all the rest, 'tis against the Testimony of all our Senses and Experiences. No such Argument can possibly be good, how cunning soever, as Contradicts and pretends to Confute our very Senses and Experience; and we all see and find by all our Senses and Experiences, that we can do many things, Freely, Arbitrarily, at our own Will and Pleasure, and do them, or undo them, backward, and forward, as oft as we please. Any Argument than that wou'd prove we have no Free-Will, is just like the Perverse Argument of a great Philosopher, to prove (as he pretended) the Impossibility of Motion, against another Philosopher, who troubled not himself to Unravel the strong Sophistry of the Argument, but Answer'd it only by walking to and fro before his Eyes, to demonstrate, that Motion was possible.

But this Argument against Free-Will, having got so many Followers, and Religion so much concern'd in it; tho' we think Ordinary, Honest People need not heed it, but Confute it only by their Senses and Experience, yet we are willing to be at the pains of Unravelling the Sophistry of it, and considering what Reason it pretends to. For which I bespeak your Patience to Examine it a little further.

We must grant that nothing that is purely Contingent, and depends upon Free-Actions, can be certainly foreseen, but by an Infinite Knowledge, and that is only in God. Now it is true, that what Infinity is, as to the Knowledge or Omniscience of God, we cannot Rightly Comprehend, any more than we can, throwly, all, his other Attributes. But what Apprensions God gives us of himself is, by Comparisons, or Deductions

ations from our own Natures and Understandings. Therefore we must measure his Knowledge in this Respect, by such Measures, and with such Conditions, as may Reconcile it with his other Attributes, and make his Revelations Agree with our Capacities, at least not to Contradict our Reason and Understandings, nor lay Positions contrary to Common Sense.

Therefore, tho' the true Nature of Infinity cannot be Argued upon by us, because strictly speaking, there is no Measures in it, no Degrees in it, nor First, nor Last, nor Before, nor After, nor Times, nor Seasons; yet when we would understand any thing by it, we must speak in our Measures of it; and then we must allow Degrees, even in Infinity, with respect to us. In his Love, there is more and less: he must be supposed to Love some more than others, and some less than others: So in his Knowledge, we must allow Sooner, or Later, First and Last, Intuitions, or Inspections, or Cognizance of his Creatures Affairs. We cannot otherwise frame to our selves any Comprehension of Infinity, nor Reason otherwise about it. So that without Confining our selves to strict Metaphysical Theology about the Infinite Nature of God, and his Fore-knowledge, which we cannot Comprehend; we may Safely and Intelligibly suppose, that because a thing cannot be certainly known by us to be done, till it is done; and all things are in God's sight from the Beginning, even the most Contingent Future Things, that are never so many Ages yet to come; Therefore God foresaw all things as done already, and Decreed his Rewards and Punishments Accordingly. First, God determined to leave some Events to Free Agents, and leave them to their Choice, whereby the Events would be purely Contingent, and be the Result of Liberty.

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Then he saw how each Man wou'd determine his own Will Voluntarily, and so how those Events wou'd happen, and then Decreed the Rewards and Punishments for them. And let all this be from Eternity, if you will; it does not hinder the Liberty and Contingency that God first Decreed to allow; notwithstanding the Contingent Event, cou'd not be hid from his Foreknowledge.

More particularly, God first Decreed to make Rational Voluntary Agents, with a Free-Will, and Choice, to Determine their own Actions, to good or bad Facts. Secondly He Decrees the Commands, and Rational Motives to them, for the Choosing Good, and Avoiding Evil Actions. Thirdly, He foresees, how some will Chuse to be Obedient, and some still Refractory, in that free use of their Will; that some will be his Servants, and some will not; and consequently sees all the Events, and sees every Step, each makes to one side or other, which must therefore be supposed as already done in his Sight, which Sight or Knowledge of the Action, after it is done (Humanly speaking) did not make it necessary to be done; nor had any Causality on it, any more than our own certain knowledge of an Action, after it is done, was the cause of its being done. Fourthly, God having foreseen all the Events, Decreed unalterably the Rewards and Punishments of each. These several degrees of Procedure in God's Knowledge and Determinations, we must, for our Capacities, allow of; if we speak of his Foreknowledge or Decrees at all: else we can never tell, how to make any thing of them, or understand any thing about them, or Reason upon any thing from them. 'Tis true, we must say, we know nothing Truly, Exactly, or Rightly of them, as they are in their own true Nature: for

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our Finite and Dark Understanding here cannot Comprehend Infinitely. Neither can we fully Comprehend all his other Attributes; but by what we can gather, by Comparison, to what we know of our own Natures, we can form such Notions of God's Attributes, his Justice, his Mercy, his Goodness, his Truth, his Love, &c. As are sufficient for our Purpose, of Knowing, Honouring, Loving, and Obeying, our Creator: And all his Scripture Revelations of himself, to us, are after this manner, suited to our Capacities, and Condescend to our own Notions, which our own Natures Teach us. And these things Men may and must Argue upon, if they Argue at all; and that we cannot hinder them of. Men will say, that God Loves Vertue, and Hates Vice, that he will shew Mercy to Penitents, and Anger and Wrath to Impenitent Sinners, and that is Truth. But some Men will say, That there cannot be an Incarnation of God, That there cannot be a Trinity, &c. With such, we must Argue from such Reasons, as are suitable to our Capacities, and are drawn from our Natural Notions, as well as we can; still owning, that we cannot fully Comprehend the Divine Essence; and what is above our Reach, we must leave so. And the same way must be used, with those that deny Liberty and Contingencies. But we must hold fast those Doctrines, that being Fundamental to Goodness and Piety, are plainly Revealed, and not Absolutely Contradictory to our own Reasons, and Understandings. If there were no Incarnation, or Trinity Revealed, we shou'd want such mighty Assurances, as we have thereby of the Infinite Mercy, and Goodness of God, to us, and such Ravishing Motives, to our selves, for the Loving our Gracious God. And if there were no Liberty or Contingency of Actions, we shou'd have

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no Foundation for Virtue, or Vice; no sufficient Motives, to Influence our Choice of good Life, from bad Life; at least, not sufficient for Habitual Sinners, to Encourage their Reformation. Now, if we let Men go on with such Conclusions, against Liberty and Contingency, from such Premises as God's Foreknowledge, and Decrees; the Consequences will be Infinitely bad, and fatal to Virtue, and tho' they deny the Consequences by Subtilties, what signifies that? When those Consequences will unavoidably follow, in the Common Sense of the Vulgar, which are the generality of Mankind, that cannot spin Subtilties so Nice, as to rid their Minds of the Consequences, which Common Reason Enforces. Nor do I know, whether any Man can be so Subtle, as to get rid really, in Human Understanding, from such Consequences, truly following such Conclusions; if they can, they have an Art of Sublimation, or Chymical Divinity, that most of the other Learn'd and Judicious, and Pious Men in the World cannot understand.

I shou'd think, all this put together, were enough to satisfy any Reasonable Impartial Christian, that wou'd seek for Rational Grounds, to make their Religion a *Reasonable Service*, as the Scripture Calls it; to make it agree with the Natural Dictates of Human Understanding: The want of which, wou'd make Christianity never to be capable to Convert Infidels; who have no other Rule, but Common Reason to Judge by. And it is sadly Observable, that since this, and some other Unreasonable Doctrines, as Transubstantiation, and the like, have been fasten'd, as Cloggs to Christianity, the Conversion of Infidels, has been clearly stop'd; and perhaps as many have forsaken, as have come of later Ages, into Christianity; if we cou'd reckon all our  
Atheists,

Atheists, Deists, Libertines, and Apostates, of every kind.

Now, when on the one Hand, the Answers to these Arguments about Prescience, are so Natural, and so Evidently Justifiable, and so necessary for the security of Virtue, Morality, and Industry, and so useful to uphold in all Mankind, Honourable Opinions, of the great Goodness, unspeakable Mercy, Truth, Sincerity, and Equity, of our most Gracious God. What a needless Confusion is it, on the other Hand, for a Nicety of one Sophistical Argument, or the Philosophical Jargon of some Conceited Scholastic's, to Espouse such a Notion of Prescience and Decrees, as would overthrow all Common Sense, and stuff both the Scriptures, and our own Heads, with Insuperable Difficulties and Contradictions. What else, but the grossest Contradictions and Absurdities, can follow that Argument, that whatsoever is certainly foreseen by God's Omniscient Knowledge (which Attribute of his, we cannot fully Comprehend) that whatever is so foreseen, must therefore be so certainly done, as in the Nature of the Act and Event, to leave no Freedom, or Contingency, but all absolutely Necessary, Predetermined, and Fore-Decreed. For my part, I must own, that I Believe, notwithstanding any Argument, I could ever see for the contrary, that Prescience in God, even as we apprehend the Nature of such Prescience, may well be Reconcilable with Liberty and Contingency. Our Adversaries cannot but Confess, it is sometimes in a Man's Power, how many Words he will speak, and when he will hold his Tongue; when he will shut his Eyes, and when he will open them; when he will bend his Finger, and when he will stretch it out; but all these, and a thousand more, are plain Contradictions to their

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Argument:

Argument : For all those are foreseen by that Omniscient Knowledge, that is not Omniscient, unless it fore-know all things, all these Actions then, must by their Doctrine, be Absolutely Necessary, and Decreed from Eternity; which brings so many Absurdities after it, as I wish the Followers of that Strain, would seriously Consider, and leave off their Biggotry, to such vain Philosophy, as St. Paul bids us beware of.

We would say nothing of God's Foreknowledge, or Absolute Decrees at all, if they would forbear Inculcating such things into Vulgar Heads. Which we see, the generality of those that frequent the Meetings, are possessed with. And they Infect some weak Heads among our People, who are led, to think that there is no Freedom, or Liberty, of Actions, nor Contingency of any Events. But, if they will needs talk of such Absolute Irrespective Decrees, Elections, Predestinations, and Foreknowledge, as they will grant, does not take away Liberty and Contingency, nor fix an Irreversible Doom, upon People before they were Born (if they can clear that, from a Contradiction in their own Minds) we have done with them then, and we'll grant them, what Terms they will of that kind, which leaves us a Power of doing good Works, or bad Works, and to have Rewards or Punishments, for them, and not Anticipate our Doom, without regard to our Life. Such Predestinarians, we agree with, so far, as it is only a Representation of God's Power, and Absolute Dominion, over his Creatures, and if what he might Peremptorily do with us, tho' in his Mercy and Goodness, he does otherwise, and gives us Gracious Conditions, and Covenants, of his Eternal Kindness and Love, for doing Good, and avoiding Evil, thro' his Grace; which Grace, we owe to his own

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Free Gift also, and are Condemn'd, if we will not use it. This we own, wou'd put an end to all Controversy between us. Which the Lord of his Mercy grant, for the sake of those poor Souls, that by such Rigid Predestinarian Sophistry, started in those latter Ages, have been, and are still, deluded out of their Wits, and often thrown upon Despair on the one Hand, or Presumption and Obduration, on the other.

One thing more, is all I shall now speak to, which I have heard, to be the Sense of a very Vertuous Person, upon this Subject. I cannot call it an Objection, but it may seem somewhat to Interfer, tho' really it does not, with this State of the Case of Predestination. And it is this, That as to Salvation; and Damnation, all this may be Right; but yet, that there is some Predestinated Lot, for every Christian's Fortune, or Circumstances, in this World, as to Life, Death, Marriage, Estate, &c. I grant it; but that is Conditional too, for the most part, still so as not to Exclude all the Effect of our own Endeavours. If we do Well, we shall be visibly Bless'd in this World, and they that do Ill, are visibly Cursed. This is the general Rule, tho' it be not without some Exceptions. God keeps a general Providential Power in his own Hands, for his Ends, in Governing this World, and often lets Good betide some Evil People, and often Afflicts good People, but that is not the general Course of things; but is only now and then, when God sees some Reason, that tends thereby to the good of his own general Government. But for the most part, things follow the Course of their Natural Causes. Tho' the Battle is not always *to the Strong, nor the Race to the Swift*, yet, for the most part it is. And it is generally in most Peoples Power, to Marr or Mend, their own Fortune.

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Tho' sometimes God Bless some, and Prospers others, unaccountably, for Reasons known to himself, but unknown to us. 'Tis the surest, and first Principle of all Piety, that God's Providence Over-rules all things, by Interposing, or forbearing to Interpose, when he pleases. And so it is in the Casualties of Sickneſs, Death, or the Period of Life. *His Days are determined.* (says Job) *Thou hast appointed his Bounds, that he cannot pass.* Job. 14. 5. This, and the like, is produced by some, to Prove, that there is a fixed time for every Person, when they must Dye; and that they can neither Live longer, nor Dye sooner. But it does not Prove that; but only, that there is a certain Period in each Person's Nature, according to the strength of the particular Constitution, God has given to each, in the Frame of their Nature; beyond which, their Natural Life cannot extend, tho' nothing shou'd hurt them inwardly or outwardly. For Nature it self, will at last in the final Period of its strength, Decay and Dissolve: But that does not prove, but that it may end sooner, by Violence or Mismanagement. As a Chandler makes a Candle, that will last so many Hours, and cannot last longer, tho' never so Rightly used; but that does not prove, but that it will be spent, or put out in a quarter of the time, if Violence be used to it, or that it be Exposed to the Wind, or Fire. So God has thus appointed the Bounds, that each one cannot pass, and his Days are determined, as to the utmost, he can Naturally Live; but that does not Argue, but that he may Praternaturally Dye sooner, by his own, or others Fault; yet still, God's Providence, can Interpose when he pleases, to shorten or lengthen any ones Life, besides, or beyond Natures Limits, for Reasons of his own, in his general Government of the World; and sometimes



he does so, at the Prayers of his Servants, tho much seldomer perhaps, than he forbears Interposing, and leaves things to Nature or Common Causes, as himself sees fit. But this good Providence of his that we know, can Over-rule all things when he sees it fit, is the Just Ground of our Prayers to him, both in our Distress, and Prosperity; and of our constant Dependance on him, who can make *all things work together for good, to them that Love God.*

If any Critical Heads are so Subtil, as to have some Nice Objections yet, which they think, nothing I have said comes up to, to as fully to satisfy them. I take no care for that; I have satisfied fully, to my own understanding, the best Objections I cou'd yet find, or think of. And I hope, what has satisfied me, may satisfy Good Plain Honest Christians, that are more Practical, than Speculative, and have more Piety, than Subtilty. And perhaps, what I have already said, is enough to that purpose. And I do rather think, I have been too Prolix; and I fear'd Erring the more in Tediousness, or Abstruseness, if I shou'd Start more of the Nicety of some Fruitless Objections, which the generality of Good Christians, cannot be so proper Judges of, and might tire even Philosophers themselves. And the Truth is, if we'll believe nothing that is capable of some difficult Objections, from the Licentious Philosophers, or Hobbists of this Age; we may remain Scepticks in most things for ever. But the clear Documents of Scripture, as generally understood by the Ancient Primitive Christians; the plain Articles of our Faith; the Principles of Moral Honesty; and the Dictates of Common Reason; are (abundantly) enough, with God's Grace, to prevent our being Imposed on, by the Subtilty of that Old Serpent, whose main design, is against the

The Christian Practice of Morality and good Life, by all means; and especially, by Undermining, as much as possibly he can, any of those Principles, that Support it. But let us continue in Union and Communion, with that part of the Truly Primitive Catholick, and Apostolick Church, the Church of England, whereof God has given us the Blessing, to be Members in these Nations, and which he has by his own Authority, Established over us; and let us hearken to her wholsom Instructions, that so plainly Agree with Honesty, Piety, Reason, and Scripture; And then, we shall assuredly be safe from all the Ravening Wolves, on each Hand of us, that strive to break our Fold, and make a Prey of our Flock: Christ our Shepherd will deliver us from them all, and from Satan their Leader. Which the Lord of his Mercy, Grant to us all. *Amen.*

### *Advertisement.*

**W**Hilst this Book was in the Press, some of the Friends of the Gentleman, that held this Controversy with me, made me Believe, That he wou'd willingly joyn at last, with the Church of England Doctrine, in all points; if he cou'd creditably come off from this Contest, and without seeming to give any Submission, or Deference, to me. Upon this Account, I Charitably (and as I thought, very kindly) Proposed, to add the Postscript here following, to the End of the Book; and gave it to a Friend of his, to let himself Approve of it first, or to know, if it wanted any thing that wou'd please him; And sent him therewith, that Part of the Conference, that Related to the Church Articles, which I intended then for the Conclusion, of the whole; because, I heard it was those only that he struck at then: And I saw them Quoted, in his own Hand Writing. But after he kept it from me about a Month, I got the Fruit of his Meditation, Written in two or three Lines, by his own Hand, at the End of it. Which is here Subjoyn'd with the said Postscript. Being forced

forced thus to Vindicate my self, from the Abusive Nature  
 he Charges me with : And to let the World know, that if  
 I was Mistaken, in any hard Censures, or Words, he  
 provok'd me to before ; I had, in this Publick Design'd  
 Postscript, condemn'd my self for it ; owld my fault ; took  
 all the shame to my self ; and gave all the Glory of the  
 Contest (if any cou'd be in it) to him ; and Acknowledg'd  
 he over-came me with goodnes. And whatever happen'd  
 between us before (wherein I wou'd let any Impartial  
 Christian Judge whether I was not first Assaulted, and  
 more abused all along, than he) yet he cannot say that since  
 I sent him this Overture of Peace, and more than Sufficient  
 Satisfaction, I ever offer'd the least Contradiction to it  
 by Word or Deed, for a whole Month, till I got this An-  
 swer of his ; which calls it all, *Fulsom Flattery*, and so  
 leaves me no room to know, what Tenderness I can have  
 for him, which will not be call'd Flattery still. I have  
 been often told (tho I did not believe it) that this is all the  
 Measure of Kindness, or Justice, any Church of England-  
 Man may Expect to meet with from any Obstinate Calvinist.  
 And till I saw this usage from him (the Conference not being  
 Printed then, so far as to the end of the Five Church Arti-  
 cles) I had conceal'd several of his Expressions, which were  
 least for his Credit : And the last Seven or Eight Pages of  
 the Conference had been spared : I Intending to have ended  
 it then, with a few Concluding Sentences, after what concern'd  
 the Articles.

Here follows the *Design'd Postscript* above-mention'd.

## A Second Postscript.

**I** have had a late Occasion given me to Inform the  
 Reader, that as a Christian shou'd not be backward  
 in Acknowledging his Faults, so I Confess it is mine,  
 that not being sufficiently Acquainted with the Tem-  
 per of the Worthy Gentleman, that held this Contest with  
 me in the foregoing Conference, I was too hasty and  
 bitter upon him ; Which it seems hindred the success of his  
 speedilier owning the Truth. But since he has satisfy'd him-  
 self more thorowly by the Principal Writers of the *Church  
 of England*, that this which I have Contested for, is her  
 Doctrine ; tho' he was prejudiced at the Cause on my Ac-  
 count, whose way of Managment he did not like ; And tho'  
 his First Education somewhat Biassed him ; yet such is his  
 Honesty,

Honesty, Candor, and Ingenuity, that he has joined with the Church of England Doctrine; tho' he owns not any Deference to be due from him to me, and I own he is in the Right, seeing he thought I took too much upon me. But I can never sufficiently praise his Integrity, Piety, and Christian Disposition; in that, notwithstanding all Presumptions, either of my Opposition, or his own former Education, or Otherwise, he Acknowledges Acquiescence in the Church of England way, against Mr. Calvin's, in every Particular of the above Contested Doctrines. And not only that, but to prevent the future Mistake of others about such Matters, and to satisfy the Minds of any plain, good Christians, that do already Entertain any Doubts that way, he Consents that some thing shou'd be Published, by way of Conference, for Instruction to Ordinary Capacities; as Containing a Brief Abstract of what may be Collected from both Sides, in this long Controversy, so far as may be Cognizable to Rational Ingenious People, without any Philosophical Learning. Which Conference shou'd indeed have been much kinder, and more to his Advantage, had it not been in the Preis, and almost out, before I knew this. Yet as it is, I own all the Victory (if any there be) is on his Side, who has overcome me, with Condescension, and Goodness, so that (under God) I yield all the Glory of the Contest to him, and in Truth I aim'd at none. And I do pray God to make me an Imitator of what is good in him, and in all True Christians.

Here follows the Answer he Subjoin'd to this  
**POSTSCRIPT**, and sent me a Month after,  
 Written with his Own Hand.

*The Gentleman whom the Author hath  
 Shamefully Abused, Abhors his Ful-  
 som Flattering Devices of Vanity.*

*Wto them that call Evil Good, and  
 Good Evil.*

**N**OW in this *Postscript* I call'd him a Worthy Gentleman, I own'd his Honesty, Candor, and Ingenuity; his Integrity, Piety, and Christian Disposition, which he never own'd the least part of

of to me in all this Dispute. And in the very last three Lines, of what he thus, close under, subscribed this Answer to, I call'd him Good; twice, in two several Sentences. And if I Misapply'd the Epithet of Goodness to him, I hope I shall Escape the *Wo*, because I did it Ignorantly. But if he means *Calvinism* to be the GOOD I call EVIL; and the *Church of England Doctrine* to be the EVIL I call GOOD; I am still less concern'd for the danger of the *Wo* he calls for; but fear it will fall on his own Head, when it comes. God avert it from us all, by granting us timely to turn from our Errors; and not with blind Obstinacy be so wedded to them, as to call Evil, Good, and Good, Evil, with a Witness; that is, with a Desperate Wilful Ignorance. All Christian Condescension is surely Good; then certainly we call Good Evil, when we call it Fulson's Flattery, and that with a Haughtiness, that Insinuates as if others were so much beneath us, that they were under a Necessity to Flatter us. God deliver us from this *Wo*. And if the Gentleman (as he calls himself) will Answer the Contents of this Book, I promise him he shall have no more Occasion to say I flatter him.

I shou'd, perhaps, have conceal'd this last Insult of his, if it had come conceal'd to me. But finding he Endeavours to cast ( tho' that be unjust ) the Merit of the Cause on the Credit of the Disputants; as who is the Wickedest, in Abusive Nature, Fulson's Flattery, and calling Evil Good, and Good Evil; And he Dispersing such things about, and sending this his Last Worthy Answer in Writing, Open; through two several Gentlemen's Hands, successively, before it cou'd come to me. Since he uses these shifts, none, I think, can justly blame me ( when no other Reference will be granted me ) for Appealing to the Publick, and letting the World see so much of his weakness, which I have been unwillingly forced to do.

WORTHY GENTLEMAN,

YOUR Obedient Servant,

OW in this I call him a Worthy Gentleman, I own his Honesty, Candour, and Integrity; his Integrity, Piety, and Christian Disposition, which he never owned the last year.